

THE LIVING AGE.

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OUT OF HEARING.

No need to hush the children for her
sake,

Or fear their play:

She will not wake, my grief, she will
not wake.

'Tis the long sleep, the deep long sleep
she'll take,

Betide what may.

No need to hush the children for her
sake,

Even if their glee could yet again out-
break

So loud and gay,

She will not wake, my grief, she will
not wake.

But sorrow a thought have they of
merry-make

This many a day:

No need to hush the children. For her
sake

So still they bide and sad, her heart
would ache

At their dismay.

She will not wake, my grief, she will
not wake

To bid them laugh, and if some angel
spake,

Small heed they'd pay.

No need to hush the children for her
sake;

She will not wake, my grief, she will
not wake.

Jane Barlow.

The Academy.

TWO VERSIONS FROM THE OLD
IRISH.

[These songs are literal verse renderings, in imitation of the original metre, of Prof. Kuno Meyer's translations of two very early Irish nature poems in "Four Old Irish Songs of Summer and Winter."]

WINTER SONG.

Cold, cold until Doom!

The storm goes gathering gloom;

Each flashing furrow a stream;

A full lake every ford in the coom.

Sea large are the scowling lakes;

Thin sleet-spears swell to an host;

Light rains clash as shields on the
coast;

Like a white wether's fleece fall the
flakes.

The roadside pools are as ponds;

Each moor like a forest uplifts;

No shelter the bird-flock finds;

Breech high the stark snow drifts.

Swift frost hath the ways in his hold,
Keen the strife round Colt's standing
stone!

And the tempest so stretches her fold,
That none can cry aught but "Cold!"

SUMMER SONG.

Summer's here! free, balm-blowing;

Down the brown wood verdure's glow-
ing;

Slim, nimble deer are leaping;

Smooth the path of seals¹ is showing.

Cuckoos make mellow music;

There is soft, restful slumber;

Gentle birds glance on the hill-side,

And swift gray stags in number.

Restless run the deer—behind them
Pours the curled pack, tuneful baying;
From end to end laughs the strand,
Where the excited sea is spraying.

Playful breezes through the tops,
Drum Daill, of your black oaks welter;
While the noble, hornless herd²
Seek in Cuban wood a shelter.

Every herb begins to sprout;
The oakwood tops with green abound;
Summer's in, winter's out!
Twisted hollies wound the hound.

Loud the blackbird pipes his lay,
The live wood's heir from May to May;
The excited sea is lulled to sleep;
In air the speckled salmon leap.

The sun smiles over every land;
To the brood of cares the back of my
hand!

Hounds bark, tryst the deer,
Ravens flourish, summer's here.

Alfred Perceval Graves.

Athenæum.

¹ The path of seals—the sea.

² Hornless herd—wild horses.

THE AWAKENING OF CHINA.

The present condition of the Chinese Empire, and the forces now gathering strength among its people, merit the serious attention of politicians throughout the world; for it is those forces and the direction in which they are guided which will mould the future of that vast country, and determine the relations, both political and commercial, which shall exist between Europe and America on the one hand, and the 300 or 400 millions inhabiting the western littoral of the North Pacific, on the other.

The situation now and that existing ten years ago appear at first sight to present many features of resemblance. Then, as now, a great war, in which Japan had gained an unbroken series of successes, had just ended; then, as now, a heavy blow had been dealt at convictions and sentiments, of mature growth, in many cases consecrated by centuries; then, as now, there was a general consensus of opinion that if China was to maintain her position among the nations, or even to remain a nation at all, she must lose no time in reforming her administration on Western lines, in reorganizing her forces, and in adopting the results of Western science. But these resemblances are superficial rather than real. The war of 1894-95 resulted in placing China at the mercy of Russia, whose grip upon her throat has been steadily tightened since; this war, avowedly undertaken by Japan in defence of her own national existence, has freed China from that grip. The leaven of progress, which ten years ago was only beginning to ferment, appears now to have leavened almost the whole lump, while much has happened in the interval, of which some account must be given if the present situation is to be rightly understood.

In the recognition of the necessity for reform the provinces were ten years ago far in advance of Peking, the seat of government and of the controlling power of the Empire. There, it was believed, or at least hoped, that the system which had proved a sufficient defence against the storms of centuries would be adequate to resist, at any rate during the lifetime of those then holding office, the comparatively small forces which Western nations could send against China; while even in the provinces, though the necessity for reform was freely admitted in the abstract, it was desired only so long as personal interests were unaffected by it. Among the younger generation, however, it was recognized that the defeats sustained in the war with Japan were due to two causes, and to two causes only—to official corruption, which sent troops into action with cartridges half-charged with charcoal, and with shells in which black beans took the place of pebble powder; and to the conservatism which refused to profit by Western science. By them a "national defence" or "reform" party was instituted, which advanced so rapidly in numbers and influence, that even before the termination of the war it claimed to be heard on the question of concluding peace with Japan. The excitement and anxiety for the future caused throughout China (i) by Germany's seizure of Kiaochow in November, 1897; (ii) by Russia's consequent demand for Port Arthur, though in conjunction with France and Germany she had forced Japan to retrocede that fortress on the ground that "its possession by a foreign Power would be a perpetual obstacle to a lasting peace"; and (iii) by the public discussion of partitioning China: these causes combined materially swelled the ranks of the re-

form party, which submitted a long and very able memorial urging rejection of Russia's demands. Both this and the earlier memorial merited far more attention than they received at the time. For the frequent references made in them to international law and Western history, showed to what distances the authors had diverged from the stereotyped course of study, and the remarkable number of signatures, appended by natives of distant inland provinces, how general was the diffusion of these new studies. These documents showed also that this party represented a national movement, which aimed by reform of the administration and by the study and assimilation of Western science at making China a strong and progressive nation, which would oppose to the last dismemberment and spheres of influence; but which was favorably disposed towards the introduction of foreign enterprises, provided they were worked in conjunction with Chinese, and were so controlled that they would not prejudicially affect Chinese autonomy. The reactionary influence in Peking was, however, sufficiently strong to delay presentation of this memorial until the convention leasing Port Arthur to Russia had already been signed. His Majesty was, however, so impressed by the document that, on assuming the reins of government, he summoned to his side a number of the ablest members of the party, and, acting under their advice, launched in the summer of 1898 that remarkable series of edicts which promised to inaugurate a new era in Chinese history. Merit was to be the one touchstone for official appointment and promotion; sinecures were abolished; temples throughout the Empire were to be changed into schools of Western learning; essays on subjects drawn from that learning were substituted in the literary examinations for involved dissertations on obscure quotations from the classics; national

colleges of agriculture, commerce, and industry were established; and a national army, with naval and military academies, was instituted. The ultra-conservative bureaucracy of Peking, especially the less highly educated Manchus, alarmed at the consequences to themselves of these radical changes, appealed in September of the same year to the Empress Dowager to resume the reins of power and save the country from ruin. The Emperor, being unsupported by the most powerful of those on whom he relied, was easily disposed of; his deposition followed; the most prominent of the reform party were executed, banished, or cashiered; and all the progressive edicts were cancelled in turn. The reactionaries, who had thus gained control at Peking, resented as warmly as the reform party did, the manner in which European nations were satisfying their "earth-hunger" at China's expense, and the humiliation thus inflicted on their country; while they found additional cause for anger in the constant disturbance of China's hitherto placid existence. But the moment was not opportune for action, and they bided their time. They had not long to wait. In the winter of 1899-1900 the ill-feeling caused in Shantung by the lease of Kiaochow culminated in an outbreak against the Government. Reactionary statesmanship suggested that foreign nations, being as powerful as they are, China, after her recent defeat, was too weak to resist their imperious demands; but if the people were prepared to resist them by force of arms, their arms should be directed against the aggressive foreigner, not against the Government: then, if China united in one supreme effort, the land might be freed once and for all from the hatred foreigner. The bait was swallowed, and the cry "Down with the Government" gave place to the new one of "Uphold the Dynasty; down with the foreigner."

The movement spread, priests assured the young recruit of invulnerability in face of foreign weapons; and the reactionaries, only too willing to be convinced, yielded to the fervor of fanaticism, and boldly supported the so-called "boxer" uprising against foreigners.

The telegraphs and railroads, hateful reminders of foreign interference, were (though Government property) first attacked and destroyed, and Peking cut off from communication with the outside world; the churches and foreign buildings outside the legation quarter having been burned, that quarter was formally invested by Government troops, and masses of the latter were hurled against Tientsin. It is this fact which differentiates this uprising from all those which preceded it during the intervening thirty years; in them Government troops and Government influence had been loyally employed to restore order and protect the foreigner, in this case both were thrown into the scale in favor of the movement.¹ That the legations succeeded in holding out until relief reached them, must be attributed to the restraining influence of such men as Prince Ch'ing and the Grand Secretary Jung-lu, who, though unable to suppress or control the upheaval, realized its stupidity and folly, and wisely concealed from general knowledge the existence in Peking of parks of heavy modern ordnance that would have

speedily overcome the feeble resistance the legations could offer to systematized attack. Outside of Peking, great as was the loss of life among foreign missionaries and their converts, that loss would have been multiplied tenfold but for the splendid behavior of certain high Chinese officials—of Hsi Ching-Ch'eng and Yüanch'ang, members of the Tsungli Yamèn, who, though fully aware of the death penalty to which they rendered themselves liable, and which they suffered, but sacrificing themselves to save their country, substituted the word "protect" for "destroy" in the draft of the second Edict ordering the extermination of foreigners, before issuing it to the provinces; of Liu K'un-yih, Governor-General at Nanking, Chang Chih-tung, at Wuchang, and Yüan Shih-k'ai, in Shantung, who, despite stringent orders from Peking, maintained peace and order throughout the vast territories under their jurisdiction, and so closed the flood-gates towards the south; and of Tuan-fang, Acting Governor of Shensi, who as a Manchu might have been expected to sympathize with the Manchu leaders in Peking; but who not only suppressed all overt manifestation of boxerism within his province, but had all missionaries in it conducted under armed escort to safety at the treaty-ports.

The "Boxer" uprising was the death-throe of that conservatism and bigoted reverence for the past which had with

¹ It has been frequently stated that by their demand for the evacuation of the Taku forts, the foreign Admirals turned what had previously been only a local outbreak into a national movement against foreigners. This is, too, China's contention, but it is not warranted by the facts. It is evident from the diary of Mgr. Favier, the brave defender of the Pei-t'ang, or Northern Cathedral, published in the "Missions Catholiques," that the appointment of Prince Tuan, "the supreme head of the boxers," on June 11, as president of the Tsungli Yamèn was the signal that the Government had definitely thrown in its lot with the boxers. On the same day M. Sugiyama was dragged from his cart and murdered by the soldiers of Tuan

Fu-hsiang (the violently anti-foreign Chinese General), who "font cause commune avec les boxeurs et veulent empêcher tout Européen de sortir de Pékin ou d'y entrer." On the 12th, 13th, and 14th all the foreign houses and churches in Peking, the legations excepted, were destroyed, and on the 14th the Pei-t'ang was cut off from all communication with the outside—"nous ne pouvons plus communiquer avec personne, les portes de la Ville Jaune sont fermées, gardées par les soldats du Prince Tuan." The summons to evacuate the Taku forts was given on the 16th. There can be no doubt that had not those forts been occupied, every foreigner, in North China at least, would have been swept off the face of the earth.

steadily increasing force during the last century restricted not only the development but the vitality of the Empire. The reactionary party was practically wiped out; its chief leaders had either been killed during the hostilities or been sentenced to death, and against the provincial authorities who obeyed them suitable punishments had been pronounced by Edict; while the lesson taught by the war with Japan was re-impressed upon the nation—that measures of defence which had proved sufficient for all China's needs in the past are of no avail under present conditions, and that a horde of undisciplined levies, no matter how vast their numbers, is no match against a comparatively small force, if well-disciplined and armed with modern weapons.

The signature of the Peace Protocol on September 7, 1901, was followed by the gradual withdrawal of the invading forces, except on the part of Russia, which country, on the ground that shots had been fired upon Blagovestchensk, a town on the northern shore of the Amur, had invaded Manchuria, and forced her way by fire and sword right down to the coast, occupying all three provinces, even to the treaty-port of Newchwang. Russia endeavored to utilize withdrawal as a lever for the extortion of further territorial and other concessions from China, a course that evoked such strong protests from the other Powers that eventually a convention was signed, fixing dates six months apart on which the three provinces should be evacuated in succession. On various pretexts Russia evaded giving effect to this convention, and at the same time took such high-handed action in Korea, that her influence in Seoul threatened soon to become even more dominating than it had already for some years past grown in Peking. In consequence of the industrial development of late years in

Japan, Korea had come to be regarded by the latter country not only as an outlet for her own overflowing population, but as an absolutely necessary granary from which to draw her food-supply. For these reasons she could not look on with equanimity and see Korea pass under the domination of an unfriendly nation. When, therefore, two of the three dates fixed for the progressive Russian evacuation of Manchuria had passed, and Russia had not only not withdrawn a single regiment, but was steadily tightening her grip both on that country and on Korea, the Japanese Government began to feel serious misgivings both as to Russia's intentions and as to China's power to insist on execution of the convention, and decided to herself address Russia on the subject. After six months spent in diplomatic negotiations, which were conducted on the part of Russia with an entire lack of that seriousness which the situation demanded, and with barely concealed contempt for Japan, the latter country, failing to obtain any satisfaction, broke off relations. It is the war which ensued and which proved an unbroken series of successes for the Japanese arms both on land and sea that has just ended.

While negotiations were proceeding Russia, entirely misjudging the temper and strength of Japan, professed absolute incredulity as to the possibility of war, and no less absolute confidence that if Japan were foolhardy enough to venture on hostilities, her forces would without difficulty be swept into the sea. And so strong a conviction of the overwhelming might of Russia had the acquiescence of all the other Powers in her high-handed action in Manchuria and Korea produced in the minds of the Peking Government, that down to the end of the war Russia's statement after each successive defeat that the next battle meant irreparable disaster to the Japanese forces was

implicitly believed. But when China saw that Russia, though she had not gained a single victory, was willing to come to terms, she at last realized that that nation's power had been broken—and by Japan, a country she affected to look down upon and despise only a few years ago; and she asked herself why, if Japan, by the adoption of Western science and learning, had been able to raise herself so high in so short a time, she should not do the same, and by making use of Japanese instructors and text-books, save herself the initial drudgery and attain the same results in half the time.

During the progress of the "Boxer" outbreak the Reform party was compelled by prudential considerations to mark time. The suppression of that movement led, however, at once to a rapid development in the demand for translations of Western text-books and Western literature generally; while the Court itself, purged of its reactionary supporters and chastened by the hardships of its long and trying journey to and from Hsi-an—to which place it had fled on the arrival of the Relief Corps—re-entered Peking convinced that China could no longer with safety stand still; and when pressure was exerted by the provinces in favor of reform, there was no longer the backbone in Peking to resist it: experience had shown that the provincial officials had gauged the situation at the time of the outbreak with far greater accuracy than their colleagues in Peking had been able to do, and to reject their advice now might again mean disaster. Thus all the Edicts issued by the Emperor in 1898, which were then to bring ruin on China, and did cause his downfall, were, one after the other, re-issued, and others, more far-reaching, as well—the old system of literary examinations was abolished once and for all (though what exactly is to take their place is not yet quite

clear), the old contempt for a military career was cast aside and a Nobles' Military Academy instituted. It had, too, been rumored that one of the last acts of the Emperor prior to the *coup d' état* was to draft an Edict laying the foundations of a National Assembly; but, if so, it never saw the light. Now the establishment of a Constitutional Government has been urged in memorials and preached in newspapers; and the Empress Dowager, it is announced, has decided to sanction this radical change. But can institutions and customs, the outgrowth of 2000 years, be thus swept away by a stroke of the pen in favor of a new *régime* without producing a catastrophe?

The essentials of a Constitution, as understood in Western Europe, are a franchise on a truly national basis for the election of a Representative Assembly, the right of free discussion in such Assembly, and the power to make the will of the representatives effective; but, these essentials apart, the power wielded by the Sovereign varies considerably in different countries. This point is recognized by the leaders of the movement for the introduction of constitutional government in China, who, in order to avoid too great a curtailment of the Sovereign's prerogatives, favor the Japanese rather than the English form. Yet, even with this restriction, the idea of deliberately and under no popular compulsion substituting a constitutional for an autocratic form of Government—which that of China is usually considered to be—appears a very bold one. When regarded more closely, however, it will be found somewhat less rash than at first sight it appears. For though nominally an autocracy, the Government of China is, in fact, characterized by many features of an advanced democracy. The Emperor, though nominally he may act as he pleases, is liable to have his acts criticized by the

members of the Censorate, and is at times so severely criticized that he feels called upon to defend them publicly. The highest offices of State have been open to attainment by practically any subject of the Empire by conspicuous success in the literary examinations; and as public opinion is moulded by those who have returned to their homes after holding high office, the influence any man may exercise both in office and out of office is very great, while nobility, when conferred, automatically extinguishes itself in a few generations. Yet, curiously enough, though the most prominent men in China appear to have decided that the one hope of the country lies in constitutional government, they have no decided idea as to the model on which it should be framed. Five Commissioners have been appointed to visit foreign countries, and, after careful study of their several systems of government, to draft a Constitution suitable for adoption in China. But as no one of these officials understands any foreign language, or has made any previous study of the subject of their inquiry, and as the length of their absence abroad is limited to a few months, their mission appears to show a lamentable ignorance on the part of the Government of the magnitude of the task entrusted to them.

That the Chinese are in no way inferior in mental capacity to Western nations may be conceded, but they certainly have one serious mental defect—such an implicit confidence in their own ability that they imagine they can place themselves on a footing of equality with Western nations in respect of any subject, and without that special study of fundamentals which the latter have found essential to proficiency. Hitherto they have condescended to take instruction from foreign nations in naval and military matters alone; and in these they have considered it suffi-

cient to arm themselves with foreign weapons—frequently far from the best; but they have never taken steps to provide on an adequate scale that theoretical and practical training without which the best arms are useless. The result has been that in the hour of trial officers and men have proved lacking in the capacity to meet emergency; mutual want of confidence has been displayed; and the outcome has been disaster. In this, perhaps the supreme, crisis in the history of the country the same defects are glaringly apparent. When, therefore, we note the haphazard manner in which it is proposed to decide so momentous a matter as the form the future government of a fourth of the human race shall take, can we expect that the result now will materially differ from what has been the result of similar procedure in the past, disaster?

Are we not justified in characterizing as grotesque the idea that five men untrained in any governmental system except their own, which is to be discarded, and unacquainted with the language of any one of the countries they are to visit, can in the brief space of four months attain such an intimate knowledge of the governmental systems of half a dozen countries as will enable them to advise the adoption of this principle here, and of that principle there, in the framing of their own Constitution?

Yet the problems to be solved before a Constitution can be framed for so vast a country as China are both complex and difficult, divided as that country is into twenty-two provinces containing some 2000 *hsien*, or districts, most of them exceeding an English shire both in extent and in population, and a total population of 350 or 400 millions. To name but a few of the most obvious. What is to be the unit of representation? Obviously it cannot be the *hsien*; probably it will be nec-

essary to adopt the *fu*, or prefecture, giving two representatives to each prefecture, the population of which exceeds a certain fixed number. Even then dialects differ so much one from the other that the language question will present a serious problem. How, too, is the franchise qualification to be fixed in a country the vast majority of whose teeming population lives continually on the ragged edge of destitution? And how is the Upper House to be constituted? It cannot be drawn, as is customary in most constitutional monarchies, from an hereditary nobility, because none exists. If, then, the prerogatives of the throne are to be maintained, as it is stated they are to be, and the Government is not to become republican, pure and simple, it would seem to follow that the members of the Upper House will have to be appointed by the Crown, and the Constitution in this respect follow the Italian more closely than that of any other country. Again, what is the business with which the Representative Assembly, when created, is to deal? The vast extent of the country will, in all probability, necessarily restrict its business to the framing of laws of general application throughout the Empire, the settlement of all matters of purely provincial interest being delegated to provincial or prefectural assemblies. Yet such a division would not be free from danger. Decentralization up to a certain point is, no doubt, advantageous; but, if carried too far, the result may be disintegration. And the peculiar conditions existing—especially those just now existing—in China render special precautions against this tendency most necessary. Hitherto the various provinces have, owing to circumstances—especially distance from the capital, the primitive character of the means of communication, and differences of dialect—practically constituted so many semi-independent States; so much so

that not only was it possible during the war of 1880 for the British commander-in-chief to enrol a Cantonese coolie corps which rendered most valuable assistance against their own countrymen in the north, but that, even so recently as the war with Japan, the southern provinces insisted they were at peace with that country, and that war was being waged by the naval and military forces of the Pei-yang, or northern provinces, alone. There seems, too, a tendency towards this lack of solidarity of interests being intensified rather than diminished by the present temper of the people. For example, the naval and military colleges at Nanking experienced such difficulty, when first established, in obtaining cadets from Kiangsu (the province in which Nanking is situated) that it was found necessary to invite students from the neighboring provinces of Anhwei and Chehkiang. Recent history having, however, proved that China cannot maintain her independence unless she has trained officers, and the traditional contempt for the military profession rapidly becoming in consequence a thing of the past, the younger generation of Kiangsu is now anxious to join, and, ignoring the national character of the two services, demands that students from other provinces shall be expelled and the colleges established in Kiangsu be reserved for Kiangsu men alone. The same spirit is displayed in the action taken to cancel concessions granted to foreign syndicates to mine or build railroads. In every instance, it is the population of one province alone which wishes to be allowed to undertake these enterprises in that province; and in the case of a trunk line running through several provinces, it is not a national concession that is asked, but that each province may build that section of the line which runs within its own borders. Unless this tendency be checked at the

outset, the provinces, governed more by the centrifugal force of local and temporary interest than by the centripetal force of permanent and national welfare, will gradually develop into independent States. To this end, therefore, railroads should be nationalized; members of colleges wherever situated should be granted degrees only after examination by national inspectors, and, though it may be necessary to maintain territorial divisions in the army, and such division may promote healthy emulation, the naval and military academies should carefully eschew all provincial discriminations.

The times, indeed, seem scarcely ripe for the adoption of a Constitutional Government on Western lines in China. In the first place, because a Constitution, evolved by the labor and travail of centuries, has proved a real bulwark of liberty and a solid foundation of national prosperity in one country, it by no means follows that adopted by another country suddenly, and under entirely different circumstances, it will produce similar beneficial results. In the second, the Chinese have been accustomed for centuries to take their opinions on public affairs ready formed for them from the influential men of their district, not to think them out for themselves. An apt illustration is afforded by what occurred during the recent boycott (referred to in detail below). A general meeting was called at Shanghai to consider what action should be taken to compel the United States to treat Chinese travellers, students, and merchants as that country had promised to treat them. The piece-goods dealers attended this meeting, and showed no less enthusiasm than the others present in voting a boycott of all American goods until justice was done, giving a verbal adhesion on the spot, which was subsequently confirmed in writing, under severe penalties for infringement. But when they

had had leisure to reflect on the millions of dollars' worth of orders already placed, and the loss that indefinite storage of the goods would mean, they repented of their promise given, yet dared not withdraw from it for fear of the guild. They, therefore, petitioned H. E. Yüan Shih-k'ai, the Governor-General of Chihli, in which province the great bulk of American goods have found a market since the territory north of Newchwang has been in military occupation, to rescue them from the consequences of their own voluntary action. If business men, usually a very canny class in China, can be so carried away by the appeals of an eloquent speaker that they fail to realize the extent to which his proposal will affect their personal interests, are they likely to show a truer appreciation of the situation when not their own but the remoter interests of the State are concerned? And is there not real danger that the constitutional government may speedily end in a dictatorship?

Though freedom of discussion in the Assembly does not necessarily mean absolute freedom of the press, the restrictions placed on the latter become gradually relaxed under the influence of public opinion. How little the highest, and even the most progressive, officials are at present prepared to sanction the public discussion of public events is shown by the recent action of the Governor-General Chang Chih-t'ung at Hankow. There a newspaper, commenting on the attempt made at the Peking Railway Station on September 26 to blow up by a bomb the train on which the five Commissioners sent to examine into the foreign systems of government were leaving, saw fit to say:

It was the work of some desperado who loves the land of his ancestors, and knows well the critical condition of the time; in fact, a sagacious and a daring

man. The task entrusted to the five Commissioners appears an impossible one; but their appointment on this mission shows they possess the confidence of the Throne, and hence, if they succeed, they will naturally be given places in the Government and the duty of establishing a Parliament. That these men should, with the experience and knowledge gained in a few months, be given the task of upsetting things which have been going on for thousands of years and so change the foundations of an Empire that has existed for tens of thousands of years, is ridiculous and must end in shameful failure. There would be no benefit for our ancestral country, while the mission of the Commissioners would be worse than useless. This expedition will only dampen the spirit of reform among all classes, and will disgrace us in the eyes of neighboring countries. It would be better, therefore, that the Commissioners be destroyed ere they start on their journey, and the necessity for repentance later be thus avoided. These, no doubt, were the thoughts of the thrower of the bomb. . . .

The consequence of this article was the suspension of the newspaper, the prosecution of the editor, and his condemnation to ten years' imprisonment.

Japan's successes during the recent war satisfied China, as has been already mentioned, that in that country she would find her most suitable guide and friend in the reform of her administration and of her naval and military forces. Even during the war, however, an extraordinary influx of Japanese had become noticeable. They captured practically all the important positions as military and educational instructors at Nanking, Wuchang, and along the Yangtze generally; in Wuchang alone some 7000 pupils are receiving instruction from them; while M. Comby, an advocate at the Court of Appeal in Paris, who was sent out on an official mission, and who has occupied six months in leisurely travel from Tongking, via Yunnan, Szechuen, and the

Yangtze, to Shanghai, "discovered Japanese advising and influencing the Chinese all along the line of his travels." Commenting on the large number of students who have already returned from Japan, he says: "Unfortunately the course taken, including three or four months spent in travel, has usually been of only a year's duration, and the young scholars have returned to their native provinces with something less than a smattering of knowledge, but, on the strength of what they are supposed to have learnt, they are placed in all sorts of impossible positions. And, curiously enough, they have come back with strong anti-foreign tendencies."² It is not, however, only the conduct of students who have returned from Japan that causes anxiety as to China's future; the behavior of students still there, and the extraordinary weakness of the Government in dealing with it, cause almost greater misgivings. There are at the present moment nearly 10,000 males and a few females in Japan, studying Western learning, practically uncontrolled. Under the influence of entirely new surroundings, and puffed up with what slight knowledge they have acquired, they in a short while consider themselves competent to advise the advisers of the Throne. They issue Chauvinist addresses, often by telegram, insisting that this action or that should be taken; and these being reproduced and endorsed by an equally Chauvinist native press, the Government becomes alarmed, and, except under extreme pressure, does not venture to run counter to what, in ignorance of the circumstances, it regards as a strong popular movement.

The first occasion on which this influence of the students in Japan made itself conspicuous was in connection with the American-China Development Company. In 1897 China granted to

² "North China Herald," of November 3, 1905.

Belgium a concession to build a railway from Peking to Hankow, for the avowed reason that Belgium, being a small and industrial nation, aggression on her part was not to be feared; and in the following year granted to the American-China Development Company the right to continue this trunk line from Hankow to Canton, also for the avowed reason that aggression was not to be feared on the part of the United States. The preliminary survey having, however, showed that the cost of construction would considerably exceed the original estimate, a supplementary agreement was negotiated in the summer of 1900; and China having meanwhile discovered that the Peking-Hankow line, though Belgium in name, was in reality being financed by the two countries from which aggression was most feared—France and Russia—insisted on the insertion in this agreement of a clause “forbidding the alienation by the Company of its rights to another nation, or to the subjects of another nation, under penalty of forfeiture.” Great, therefore, was the chagrin and alarm of China to find that, even before construction had seriously commenced, the bulk of the shares had passed into the hands of Belgians, who had thereby gained control of the Company, and were actively exercising that control in China. Invoking the clause above quoted, China justly claimed that the concern had been forfeited; when the Belgians, to save the situation, agreed to cede nominally or really to the Americans sufficient shares to give them a bare majority. The Chinese, however, felt no confidence that what had already happened might not happen again; the students in Japan appealed to the patriotism of the three provinces through which the line would pass—Hupeh, Hunan, and Kwangtung—to undertake the enterprise themselves; and the latter, really apprehensive of a “conquest by railroads” on

the part of France or Russia, such as had already been effected in Manchuria, responded promptly to the appeal; the Chinese Government allowed negotiations to be opened with the Company, and re-purchase was arranged at a price (\$6,750,000 for twenty-one miles of line built), which is said to give the promoters a profit of 300 or more per cent. In the interests of foreigners in China generally, it is, however, a matter of the deepest regret that a concession, which is the richest in future promises that China could give, and the only one ever obtained by direct intervention of the American Government, should have been surrendered for so paltry a consideration, and in a manner which affords plausible ground for the belief generally held in China that the contract was annulled for breach of faith. It is understood the Company excuses its action on the ground that it was compelled to take it by *force majeure*, by the threat that the concession had been, or would be, cancelled. Such a contention, however, hardly seems to meet the facts, seeing that the Company did not appeal to its Government for protection or support.

The success attained in this instance emboldened the students to attack in like manner all the other concessions in turn, and to endeavor to exclude foreign capital from all railroad and mining enterprises. In those provinces for which no concessions have been granted, none shall, they claim, be granted to foreigners; those that have been granted, but not taken up, shall be cancelled, and the lines already built or under construction shall be bought out. Mining concessions are to be dealt with in the same manner. And though in the treaties signed with Great Britain in 1902, and with the United States in 1903, China “recognizing that it is advisable to attract foreign as well as native capital to

embark in mining enterprises, agrees within one year to initiate and conclude the revision of the existing mining regulations in such way as, while promoting the interests of Chinese subjects, and not injuring in any way the sovereign rights of China, shall offer no impediment to the attraction of foreign capital," the Government feels constrained to bow to the popular will. Thus the country may be said, though not nominally yet in reality, to already enjoy popular government in a most effective form. The fact is, that the encroachments of foreign Powers on the territory of China during the past decade have aroused a sentiment of patriotism among the people to an extent that is not realized abroad. Taught by experience in Manchuria and Shantung, the Chinese now understand that the attraction of foreign capital for railroad and mining enterprises may be fraught with danger to the independence and integrity of their country; because hypothecation of the railway or of the mine as security for the capital is apt to be insisted on, and this may lead to a demand to establish guards, i.e., a foreign military force, for protective purposes in the heart of the empire, which would end in the destruction of native territorial control. They refuse, therefore, to countenance hypothecation; foreign loans may be raised, but on the security of taxes, not on that of territory. The standpoint thus taken up is intelligible, though the alternative acquiesced in by the people may prove to be only a degree less dangerous to the State; while the resolve to undertake such enterprises with native capital only will almost certainly mean the indefinite postponement of necessary improved means of communication. An instance to the point is the Hankow-Canton railway. Though the negotiations for the re-purchase of the concession, in order that the line might

be built by the three provinces interested with native capital only, had occupied months, it was found impossible when the terms had been agreed upon to raise within those provinces the price of re-purchase, much less the total cost of construction, and recourse to a foreign loan became necessary. The security for this loan was opium taxation; a proposal to negotiate a further foreign loan to complete the line, on the security of the line itself, was negatived by the Throne in deference to the strongly voiced objections of the provinces concerned.

This suspicion and distrust of foreign nations do not, however, make for friendly relations between them and China; but the indignation caused by the manner in which Chinese going to the United States are treated there is calculated to affect these relations far more prejudicially still. Indeed, the consequences may be so serious that the causes of this indignation merit more than a mere passing allusion. The United States, being then anxious to obtain labor for the construction of the transcontinental railway, negotiated in 1868 a treaty with China, in which both countries "cordially recognize the inherent and inalienable right of man to change his domicile and allegiance, and also the mutual advantage of free migration and emigration of their citizens and subjects respectively from one country to the other for the purposes of curiosity and of trade, or as permanent residents, and reciprocally guarantee to the subjects of the one country visiting or residing in the other the same privileges, immunities, and exemptions in respect to travel or residence as may there be enjoyed by the citizens or subjects of the most favored nation." Strong opposition having, however, in the course of time, arisen on the Pacific slope to the competition of Chinese with white labor, another treaty was negotiated in

1880 to regulate Chinese immigration. By this treaty China agreed that "the United States might regulate, limit, or suspend such coming or residence, but might not absolutely prohibit it; that the limitation or suspension should be reasonable, and should apply only to Chinese who go to the United States as laborers, other classes not being included in the limitation; that immigrants should not be subject to personal maltreatment or abuse; and that Chinese subjects, whether proceeding to the United States as traders or students, merchants, or from curiosity, together with their body and household servants, and Chinese laborers who were then in the United States, should be allowed to go and come of their own free will and accord, and should be accorded all the rights, privileges, immunities, and exemptions which are accorded to the citizens or subjects of the most favored nation." Another treaty on the same subject was negotiated in 1894, which, on denunciation by the Chinese Government, terminated on December 7 last; and the treaty of 1868 has revived, except so far as it is modified by that of 1880. It is generally understood that when a nation assumes by treaty an international obligation to act in a certain manner, it is bound to frame, and if necessary modify, its municipal law in such manner as will enable it to give effect to that obligation. In this case, however, the municipal legislation, as represented by the Geary Act of 1884 and the McCreary Act of 1893, is in direct violation of the stipulation in the treaty of 1880, that "the limitation shall be reasonable, and shall apply only to Chinese who may go to the United States as laborers, other classes not being included in the limitation." The situation produced by this legislation is thus described by Mr. C. Holcombe, formerly secretary of the American legation at Peking and a member of the

Chinese Immigration Commission of 1880.

Because other alien laborers within our borders raised a hue and cry against Chinese, guilty of no fault but that of industry, and stirred up mobs and riots against them, we proceeded to discriminate against and to exclude from the privileges of this country not the leaders and perpetrators of violence and disorder, but the victims of it. Having secured the consent of the Government of China to a restriction of labor immigration, which should be, by the terms of our agreement, both temporary and reasonable, drastic statutes were provided and enforced, which disregarded all the limitations of the treaty, and were equally an insult to China and a disgrace to us as a nation. Under them every Chinaman, whether laborer, merchant, traveller, or student, who entered any of our ports, has either been held on board ship or committed to a pen, and practically dubbed a criminal until he was able to prove his innocence. While all of the classes named, except the first, are as free to enter this land as Americans are to enter China, each of every class has practically been charged with an unlawful attempt to violate the labor exclusion law, and the burden of proof as to his innocence and his right to enter has been forced upon him. No intelligent and fair-minded man can justify or excuse such an abuse of a privilege granted to us by the authorities of China against their own national pride and to the disadvantage of their people. More than this, one can hardly fail to sympathize heartily with the Chinese Minister in his refusal to assent to any further enforcement of such abusive and degrading methods of restriction. Our own national honor and good name require that they be put an end to at once and forever.

The following concrete instances, all of recent occurrence, show to what an extent the Acts of Congress violate treaty stipulations, and what ignominy and hardship they inflict on respectable Chinese.

* "Outlook," vol. 80, p. 618.

(a) Last year a Chinese Commissioner to the St. Louis Fair was carried across the Canadian boundary while on his way East, and after he had been admitted to the country. When his train, after his excursion into foreign territory, re-entered the United States he was held up, treated roughly, and grossly insulted by the inspectors. His efforts to explain the error that had been made caused him to be treated like a criminal, and he kept out of jail only with the greatest difficulty.⁴

(b) Three Chinese gentlemen and one lady, people of culture and refinement, who arrived in Boston yesterday [June 1, 1905] by the steamship *Ivernia*, returning to China via the United States after three years' study in English colleges, were by our officers refused permission to land, were detained on the steamer, and compelled to submit to being photographed and to furnish bonds, although they held passports and a letter of introduction from Ambassador Choate.⁵

(c) I had my eyes examined on the *Doric* before she sailed. The doctor never washed his hands or the glass cylinder with which he turned the eye-lids over, and he examined ninety Chinese and Japanese. Now he did this right along. The consequence was that many "developed" the disease before we reached San Francisco. One bright boy of twelve, who was coming alone, had no disease till we were two days out from Honolulu. This boy is the son of a merchant in San Francisco. I went to see the father several times. I found the child was detained in the filthy sheds on the wharf. His certificate was all right. His father offered to get the best eye-doctor in San Francisco, but was not allowed. I saw the poor man the day before the *Doric* sailed, and he was nearly frantic. The poor little lad was sent back to China alone, and his father was allowed to see him for only half an hour.⁶

Now, under the treaty, Chinese

⁴ "New York Sun," June, 1905.

⁵ Protest of Boston merchants to President Roosevelt. One of these gentlemen has since been appointed assistant magistrate of the Mixed Court at Shanghai.

⁶ Letter in "North China Herald," October 13, 1905, p. 77.

travellers, not being laborers, are guaranteed all the privileges granted to subjects of the most favored nation. Yet under the Act of 1884, Art 6, no Chinese shall be admitted unless he produce a certificate, the details of which are recited in the Act, which is "the sole evidence permissible on the part of the person producing the same to establish a right of entry into the United States"; while a departmental ruling "has required the petty government executive officers arbitrarily to take away, on entry, from non-laborers coming over here (i.e., to the United States), for the first time their official certificates as to their status which the law requires them to produce whenever it is demanded of them." In case (a), therefore, even had the Imperial Commissioner been subjected to the indignity of having to produce a certificate as the only means of entry into the country in which he was to function, that certificate would have been taken away by a United States officer on his landing. In case (b) the King family could not obtain the required certificate in England.

It is scarcely surprising that under such circumstances China denounced the treaty of 1894, and demanded that less degrading treatment shall in future be accorded to her subjects of reputable standing. Negotiations, however, fell through, because, it is understood, the United States refused the Chinese Minister's request that Chinese immigrants should be divided into the two classes of laborers and non-laborers, as was contemplated by the treaty of 1880, and that the term "laborer" be defined. When the position was understood in China, the people took the matter into their own hands, and called a general meeting at Shanghai for July 19 to consider what action should be taken to preserve their treaty rights. The most ordinary method among Chinese of resisting official op-

pression is for shopkeepers to put up their shutters and to suspend all sales. At this meeting, which was attended by the most prominent native merchants and by representatives of all the trade guilds, it was unanimously decided to adopt similar tactics, but in a converse sense—to refuse to purchase American goods; and the movement spread rapidly to the southern and coast provinces. At the outset the object aimed at was confined to securing compliance with the terms of the treaty of 1880; but as merchants gradually realized the power of the weapon they wielded, their ambitions grew and they desired to remove *all* restrictions on immigration. A significant suggestion too, was to maintain a permanent boycott fund, which would be available to support for the time being those who lost their employment, should the boycott be carried a step farther and servants refuse employment from Americans—or from any other nationality against which it might hereafter be deemed necessary to employ the same weapon. It not being an offence under Chinese law to refrain from buying any particular firm's goods, or to urge others to refrain from so doing, interference on the part of the officials with a view to suppress the movement would have been difficult, even if their sympathies had not been, as in most cases they were, on the side of the people. The Governor-General of Chihli, H. E. Yüan Shih-k'ai, however, took up a position of his own. The trade of Tientsin, ruined by the Boxer outbreak, was just regaining its normal proportions, and he refused to countenance any action likely to result in a set-back. Perhaps, too, he realized more clearly than his colleagues the serious danger of such a movement in a country like China, where, the people being incapable of discriminating between the different foreign nationalities, a movement against one is apt rapidly to de-

velop into antagonism to all, serious anxiety having, indeed, already been caused in certain localities by the inflammatory language of certain posters. He, therefore, not only forbade every act tending to promote a boycott within his jurisdiction, but impressed his views so strongly on the Central Government that an Imperial Edict was issued on August 31 to the effect that "it behooves all to await quietly the result of the Wai-wu-pu's endeavors to settle matters equitably, and not to use a boycott of American goods with the object of opposing the proposed treaty. For since such steps endanger the good relations between our respective countries, they are also seriously harmful to the Chinese people and their trade." But it is easier to start a rock down the mountain side than it is to stop it when once launched; and though the boycott is nominally withdrawn pending action by Congress, it is still stringently enforced in some parts of the Empire, particularly in Kwangtung province, of which most of the emigrants are natives. It is the opinion of many Americans that China will probably obtain little satisfaction in the form of remedial legislation from Congress, which will resent the boycott as an attempt to dictate what American policy shall be. On the other hand, had China continued to remain quiescent, there can be no doubt that the treatment of her people would not have been ameliorated; and it is to be hoped that both Congress and the people of the United States will recognize that, all things said, all China asks is justice, the treatment promised her by treaty, and that they will abolish a system which tarnishes the fair fame of their own country and is an indignity on a friendly nation. Americans should note the eloquent words of warning spoken by Mr. Justice Brewer in the *Ju Toy Case*.⁷

⁷ "United States v. Ju Toy," 197, U. S. 182.

Finally, let me say that the time has been when many young men from China came to our educational institutions to pursue their studies, when her commerce sought our shores, and her people came to build our railroads, and when China looked on this country as her best friend. If all this be reversed and the most populous nation on earth becomes the greatest antagonist of this Republic, the careful student of history will recall the words of Scripture: "They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind"; and for cause of such antagonism need look no further than the treatment accorded during the last twenty years by this country to the people of that nation.

If, ignoring this warning, they refuse justice to China, there can be little doubt that the boycott will be renewed generally and stringently enforced, to the serious detriment not only of American trade but of that of all nations, and to the certain injury of friendly relations. In this connection it may be pointed out that the temper of the Chinese people has during the last few years undergone a great and important change. We have heard during the recent war, and heard with admiration, of Japanese ricksha coolies who reduced their daily tale of cigarettes, and of merchants who struck off a dish from their frugal meal, that such economies might swell their modest quota to the war fund. The Chinese now show themselves not incapable of the same self-denying patriotism, and it is no uncommon thing for members of a Reform League, whose salary may be \$25 (£2 10s) a month, to live on one-fourth of that sum and to contribute

the other three-fourths to the fund for the promotion of the object of the league. A country whose people act thus may accomplish much.

To summarize the above sketch of the present situation in China. That country has, after deliberation, definitely entered on the path of progress and reform, and, if allowed to work out its destiny in peace, will steadily proceed along it. The movement is a national one, but the great difficulties to be surmounted are very inadequately realized; there must be many disappointments, and so vast a change in such a country as China is cannot be consummated, even under the most favorable circumstances, without some disturbance, especially among the vast array of discontented office-holders who will find their opportunities of enriching themselves at the expense of the public steadily disappearing; while the difficulties are likely to be seriously increased by financial trouble. It is, too, a movement in favor of "China for the Chinese." Owing to the action of foreign Powers during recent years, there is a general feeling of distrust and suspicion towards all, and for the moment of anger—which can be speedily removed if the right steps be taken—towards the United States in particular. That the situation, therefore, presents serious elements of danger cannot be denied; and much patience and self-restraint, as well as friendly guidance when occasion offers, will be called for on the part of the foreign representatives during the transition period, if the adoption of a government on Western lines is to be carried through without bloodshed.

The National Review.

Shanghai.

WILD WHEAT.

BY M. E. FRANCIS (MRS. FRANCIS BLUNDELL). AUTHOR OF "LYCHGATE HALL," ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.

PETER MAKES UP HIS MIND.

The reapers had assembled earlier even than usual in Hounsell's yard. The forty-acre was to be cut that day: "A terrible big bit o' work," as one said to the other, and one that would have to be carried through with the utmost despatch, for even at that hour the oppressive heat and general sense of uneasiness seemed to indicate the advent of a storm.

"God send us good luck!" said Abel, repeating the inevitable formula.

"Amen!" responded the bystanders piously.

Then the business of the day began. The horses were led out and harnessed; two of the reaping-machines went rattling forth triumphantly, but when the third was drawn from beneath the shed one of the men looked at it dubiously.

"There be summat a bit queer here," he remarked. "These 'ere blades don't seem to work so very well."

He moved the wheel backwards and forwards with a critical air.

"'Tis foolish talk—real foolish!" remonstrated Abel. "That be the best machine—the new one what Mr. Godfrey got to-year. That baint so very likely to go wrong, that baint!"

"Ah," agreed another. "Joe, he don't seem to understand this 'ere new-fangled machinery. He don't trust nothin' new. If Joe was to have his way, us 'ud all be a-reapin' wi' sickles."

"I don't know but what sickles is best in the long run," said Joe. "I d' 'low it 'ud be best for sich as we together to use 'em. Work warn't so scarce in old ancient days——"

"More work there was, but less pay," interrupted Baverstock; "it do all come out same way i' th' end; but I do 'low you was never one to calculate, Joe. 'Tis as much as you can do to reckon up to six."

"You'll ha' to reckon wi' my cluster o' five in a minute if you gie me much more sauce," cried Joe, laughing good-humoredly, as he clenched his huge fist. "Come up, Billy! Back, Di'mond! Catch hold o' that there chain, Bob; that's it!"

The reaper went clattering out of the yard with the remainder of the men behind it; but, after all, Joe's prognostications proved to be well-founded, for on reaching the field the machine was discovered to be practically useless.

When Godfrey rode up, shortly after breakfast, he found it discarded, while the unharnessed horses were standing in the shade of the hedge.

"Us didn't like to take 'em back, ye see, wi'out your arders," explained Joe. "We thought you'd mayhap have thikky machine sent to the smithy, for Jan Fowler to see to. I d' 'low he'd soon put it to rights."

"No, no," cried Godfrey, as he dismounted and proceeded to inspect the machine with an air of great vexation. "This is a complicated thing, and might easily be put out of gear altogether. I think it will have to go back to the makers. 'Tis too bad—to-day of all days, when the weather is so uncertain."

Peter came up to the field an hour or two later; he looked pale and heavy-eyed, having, indeed, passed an absolutely sleepless night. The revulsion of feeling resulting from Nathalie's suggestion somewhat resembled that of the mediæval knight whose cruel lady

sought to test his love by dropping her gauntlet among the lions in the arena; with this difference—that while the knight in question was instantaneously cured of his passion by the occurrence, Peter, though indignant and outraged, was as hopelessly in love as ever.

All night long he nursed his wrath; his heart alternately burning as he dwelt on the insult which she had offered him, and growing cold in considering the alternative. Never again to see her; never to hear her voice; never to be intoxicated by her smile, to be maddened by her varying moods! How should he take up his life again as if she did not exist? It was impossible—impossible—a contingency too intolerable to be contemplated.

The marked coldness of his mother and Godfrey did not induce additional calmness; he was angry with them—all the more angry, perhaps, because of his secret remorse. With that quick intuition of his he read their thoughts, saw himself with their eyes, and raged the more.

Now, as he strode across the field, the men glanced askance at him; clearly he was not in a mood to be trifled with.

"Young maister's clothes will have to be took smaller or there'll be no livin' wi' en soon," said one, looking after him.

After a brief examination of the idle machine, he called up Joe Adlam and angrily inquired why the blacksmith had not been sent for to repair it at once.

"Well, tis this way, ye see, sir," returned Joe, scratching his jaw. "I did ax Maister Godfrey if I hadn't better fetch Jan Fowler, an' Maister Godfrey, he said as this 'ere reaper be terrible ticklish to deal wi', an' it 'ud most like require a more talented man to put it to rights nor what Jan be."

"Nonsense," rejoined Peter roughly, as he lifted the wheel, "it's the sim-

plest thing in the world; I can see exactly what's wrong. I could mend it myself if I had the proper tools. Run off to the smithy at once, and bring Fowler back with you."

"Maister Godfrey said—" began Joe, mildly; but he broke off, quailing before Peter's glance. "Right, sir," he said submissively, "I'll step up-along so quick as I can."

It was dinner-time, however, before the smith arrived upon the scene, and the men who had gathered in the shade of the large tree, under which the reaper stood, listened to the ensuing discussion with keen interest. Peter, in a few brief, energetic words, expounded his theory, and Jan Fowler, after some questioning, much shaking of the head, and a dubious dropping of the lower lip, suddenly declared himself enlightened.

"'Tis right, Maister Peter, 'tis right. I can follow 'ee now, sir. I couldn't get round your argyment all to once, but now I can see what ye be drivin' at."

He was proceeding with new-found animation to divest himself of coat and waistcoat, when Godfrey, returning from a tour of inspection of some outlying fields where less interesting labors were in progress, hailed him in astonishment.

"Hullo! What's going on here?" he cried. "You here, Fowler?"

"Yes," said Peter, rising to his feet, "I sent for Fowler. This is a simple matter, and can soon be put to rights."

"I'm not so sure that it is simple," retorted Godfrey, reining up his horse and looking round with an irritated air. "Did none of you tell Mr. Peter that I said the machine was to go back to the makers?"

"E-es," faltered Joe, "leastways, I—"

He broke off with a sheepish smile at the blacksmith, being a polite man and loth to hurt his feelings.

"He told me you didn't want Fowler to do the job," said Peter. "But that's nonsense! Any numbskull can see that the machine can easily be put to rights. This nut wants to be loosened, and this lever put into place."

Godfrey's color rose; Peter's tone, even more than his words, had been insulting.

"It's a valuable machine, and I won't have it tampered with by people who don't understand it. You can go back, Fowler."

The blacksmith began to put on his waistcoat with a lowering brow:

"I do 'low I could manage it so well as another," he was beginning, when Peter cut him short.

"Nonsense, Godfrey; don't be a fool! The man can do it all right. There, don't waste time staring about you, John; get to work at once."

"I forbid you to touch that machine, Fowler," said Godfrey.

"Well, be I to do it or bain't I?" inquired the blacksmith, looking from one to the other, his waistcoat hanging loose from his sinewy arms, his straw hat pushed back on his perspiring brow. "'Tis a bit puzzlin' for a man to be ardered from one side to t' other like this. Who be the master here?"

A dead pause ensued; the brothers looked steadily at each other for a full minute without replying, then Godfrey said, in a decided voice:

"I am! I think it is time that it should be clearly understood. I am the master!"

"There shall be no mistake about it in future," cried Peter, with a harsh laugh, as he walked away.

John Fowler, who was not a very perceptive person, gazed interrogatively at Godfrey, his waistcoat still dangling from his elbows.

"Be I to do this 'ere job, then?" he inquired.

"No," said Godfrey shortly.

Fowler finished putting on his waist-

coat, donned his coat on top of it, picked up his tools, and followed in Peter's wake. But, hasten as he might, he could not catch him up; and presently their roads diverged, for while the blacksmith took the path to the village, Peter turned off abruptly in the direction of Crayford.

He did not return till nightfall; Godfrey and his mother had already finished supper, and received him with stern dignity. News of the encounter between the brothers had been duly carried to Mrs. Hounsell with sundry exaggerations. Peter, as has been said, was not such a favorite as his brother, and popular feeling was against him. "He had cheeked Maister Godfrey terrible," it was said, "an' gone marchin' off wi' hisself in a regular tantrum!" Godfrey, on being questioned, had unwillingly admitted that the narrative was true in the main. Peter had not come back for dinner or tea, and was late even for supper—the cup of his iniquity was full.

"You don't want any supper, I suppose," began Mrs. Hounsell, in a tone of lofty severity. She never could realize that Peter was no longer a child.

"No," said Peter, "I don't."

The answer was so unexpected that she paused a moment before continuing: "You might at least have the manners to let me know when you don't intend to return for meals. It would show more respect for your mother."

Peter's nostrils dilated and his mouth twitched.

"Oh, I'm learning to be respectful all right," he said.

"If you are hinting at what passed between you and your brother to-day," said Mrs. Hounsell, "I must tell you that I think Godfrey was perfectly right—perfectly. You forget yourself too often."

"Don't be afraid," said Peter, "I sha'n't forget myself again."

He crossed the room towards her, and in spite of her indignation, her heart ached for him as she saw how pale he was.

"You must want something to eat, my dear," she said, in a gentler tone.

"No, I don't; I had some bread and cheese at the Blue Lion."

Mrs. Hounsell drew back with a little shiver of indignation. That her son should stoop to refresh himself at a low public-house when his mother's bountiful table awaited him was, to her, as wicked as it was incomprehensible.

"Oh, indeed!" she said frigidly.

Peter bent over her, however, and his hand dropped for a moment on her shoulder.

"Good-night, mother," he said, and kissed her.

Mrs. Hounsell and Godfrey looked at each other as he went out of the room.

"Godfrey," whispered Mrs. Hounsell tremulously, after a moment, "do you think—can it be possible that your brother has been drinking?"

"I'm quite sure he hasn't," returned Godfrey warmly; "he's just put out at what happened to-day—I'm sorry it did happen; but I really couldn't stand it any longer."

Peter was not yet in bed when Godfrey joined him in their big old-fashioned bedroom. He was standing by the window looking out into the night, not, as so often of late, towards Crayford, but towards the white ribbon of road that gleamed like silver under the moon.

Godfrey sat down on the nearest chair and began to unlace his boots, glancing surreptitiously from time to time at the motionless broad-shouldered figure which loomed darkly against the middle window. As he raised his head at last he called Peter's name in a low voice.

"Well?" said the other, without turning round.

"I say," continued Godfrey, hesitatingly, "you don't bear malice, do you, old chap?"

"No, I don't bear malice," returned Peter, his voice sounding unlike itself because of a lump which had suddenly come in his throat; "it's all right."

"You know I've always tried to give in to you as much as I could," pursued Godfrey; "but to-day, when you went flatly against my orders—"

"Yes," said Peter, "I was a bit of an ass, wasn't I? I forgot myself, as the mother says."

Godfrey sighed impatiently. He could not make Peter out; this unexpected meekness was not likely to be genuine, and, on the other hand, Peter was too generous by nature to repel an advance that was kindly meant.

"You won't make it up, then?" he said, tentatively, after a pause.

"Make what up?" returned his brother, wheeling right round, and coming towards him. "I'll shake hands, if that's what you mean; and I bear you no grudge. This thing was bound to happen. Shake hands! I'm glad to do it—it'll be the last time."

"Oh, go on!" cried Godfrey, cheerily. "What does a bit of a scrimmage signify between brothers? I daresay we'll have plenty more without liking each other any the worse."

"No, we sha'n't!" said Peter, in the same lifeless tone, as he dropped Godfrey's hand.

No more passed between them then, and soon the sound of Godfrey's regular breathing announced that he was asleep. The storm had blown over, after all, and the moon now shone in, clear and bright, through the uncurtained windows. Peter lay staring about him, now at the beamed ceiling, now at the curlous old tapestried walls, sometimes conscious of a dull pain as he told himself that the familiar room would know him no more, but more frequently revolving a diffi-

cult problem: Should it be the road—or the other alternative?

At the first streak of dawn he rose, and after a cautious glance at Godfrey's sleeping form, crossed the room to the chest where his own belongings were bestowed. Thrusting his hand into the right-hand corner of this, and fumbling for a moment amid its contents, he drew forth a small box wherein Nathalie's handkerchief lay neatly folded. Had she asked for it again he had intended to return it to her; but somehow she never had asked, and though Peter, from motives of prudence, no longer carried it about his person, he congratulated

himself every day that it remained in his possession.

Now, however, he must make his choice; if he took the road the handkerchief must be given back to Nathalie, with a farewell letter of explanation and, it might be, reproach. But if he did not take the road?

Half-unconsciously he raised the flimsy thing to his lips, and the faint perfume which still clung to it, and which was always associated with her presence, rose to his nostrils.

Peter hurriedly thrust it back amid its wrappers, and drew a long breath. He had made up his mind now—it should not be the road!

Longman's Magazine.

(To be continued.)

AN EASTER OFFERING.

I.

The view from the dining-room in the vicarage of Cottington was of the type that would be called idyllic. The sunny little lawn; the pretty borders gay with the first polyanthus and daffodils; the green stretch of field; the glimpse of the lych-gate beyond, of the old church tower—gray and square amidst the great elms, yellow with budding leaf. The village which you saw in the distance might not be picturesque on nearer view, nor the country round remarkable for beauty, but the little vicarage and its surroundings made a pretty enough picture to make the passer-by stop a moment to admire. If he were a town parson he would regard it a little wistfully; if a busy layman he would smile perhaps, at the peaceful, easy lot of the country vicar.

The vicar's wife sat gazing out of the window dreamily, with the dreaminess that proceeds not from content but from listlessness. Her face was young still, and in its refined, gentle,

timid way, pretty still, but the consciousness and coquetry of beauty had vanished before the necessities of things, and its expression when, as now, "off duty," suggested that the burden of life was too heavy.

"Mamma," cried little Basil, in whom the attractiveness of the garden was destructive of any intelligent interest in arithmetic, "when 5 and 5 makes 10, do I put down the "ought" and carry the one, or carry the "ought" and put down the one?"

"You always carry the figure on the left-hand side, dear." Mamma's voice was as patient and as apathetic as her face.

"When we took the note to Mrs. Beazley," went on Basil, "Mr. Porson was there." Apathy and patience gave place to a flush and a wince. "D'you know, he said to Mrs. Beazley that there was a lion in this parish," and Basil proceeded to draw something with a mane and a tail beneath the neglected addition sum. "I think

he thought I should be afraid, for he didn't say it very loud."

"Basil, you are silly," corrected his elder sister of eight. "He said 'liar,' not 'lion,' and he didn't speak loud, because he was talking about some one and was afraid you'd hear. Grown-up people often do that."

"Children," said Mrs. Phillips, with a bright color in her face and a tremor in her voice, "never listen to what Mr. Porson says; he's not a nice man."

"But, mamma, he carries the plate in church, and goes into the vestry with papa," cried Dora.

"Yes, dear, but— Go on with your sums."

But this reflection on the character of the awe-inspiring, well-dressed Mr. Porson was too full of interest to be put aside lightly.

"Is he like Judas?" suggested Basil, in tones of joyful anticipation of horrors to come. "Will he hang himself and be found in the brook?"

"Don't ask so many questions, dear. I don't think that's very likely. I don't like Mr. Porson very much, that's all."

"Mamma, Basil has asked at least ten questions since we began sums, and I've not asked one. May I just ask one? It's not silly; it's about Easter."

"Very well, just one." Mrs. Phillips looked reassured.

"What's an Easter offering?"

Mrs. Phillips flushed. "Oh," she said, "it's when the collections on Easter Day are given to the vicar."

"Oh, how nice that will be! Will papa have it? And shall we be able to go to the seaside?"

"I think there would hardly be enough for that." The mother turned away her eyes, for they were full of tears. "Besides, I don't think we shall have one."

"Oh," cried Dora eagerly, "but Mrs. Beazley said: 'So this new Bishop says we're to have an Easter offering.' We

heard her, didn't we, Basil, when we were waiting in the hall? Won't the Bishop be angry if we don't have one?"

"Yes," chimed in Basil, "and Mr. Porson said he might get ten shillings. I wondered who it was. And ten shillings is a lot of money; it's gold."

"I don't think he sounded quite sure about it," said Dora cautiously; "he said he *might*."

"Why, there is Mr. Porson talking to papa at the church gate." Basil leaped to the window. "Pr'aps he's telling him about it. Will ten shillings buy me a pony?"

"Children," said Mrs. Phillips, picking up the needlework she had laid down upon her knee, and bending a very harassed face over it, "don't say anything more about this; papa would not like it. And don't talk too much at dinner; papa is often busy on Tuesdays, and it worries him. You needn't do any more lessons; you can play in the garden till dinner-time. Take little Cyril with you, only see that he doesn't climb on the rockery. Not such a noise, Basil; put the books away quietly. And, Dora, ask nurse for the 40 cotton, and if baby goes on crying she can bring him down to me."

The children were shouting in the garden; the baby lay asleep on Mrs. Phillips's knee. She watched her husband coming across the field towards the house. Her face wore no longer an expression of passive melancholy, but of the anxiety which looks helplessly at a definite trouble in the near future.

Her mind recurred to a morning two years before, when she had walked with him along that very field. It was six months after they had come to Cottington. She could hear his angry, eloquent voice as if it had been yesterday: "The insolence of the man! Would you believe it? He has actually taken advantage of my absence to put down a square of linoleum in the vestry with-

out asking my permission. Linoleum, and a horrid thing at that! I wouldn't have it in my kitchen! I shall make my mind perfectly clear to Porson on the subject."

She had not thought the linoleum offensive herself, but she had said—though she did not remember that—that it was very, very trying, a most provoking thing, most tiresome of him; but at the same time perhaps it would be a pity if it led to a quarrel; she thought—speaking as one entitled to be hypercritical on the subject—that Mr. Porson had not a very good temper, and that he evidently had great influence in the village.

Whereon Mr. Phillips had said that he should not buy the favor of the village by truckling to Porson—that the only way to have peace was by showing a firm hand at the outset. Give way in this and he would soon not be allowed to preach in his own pulpit. The linoleum had seemed a small thing at the moment, but the vicar had spoken his mind, and was treated with rudeness. Then there had been the retaliation of the new lamp put in the church without consultation with the churchwardens; the dispute with the schoolmaster, who was Porson's friend; the eloquent sermon preached at Porson; the strike of the choir originating in the vicar's remonstrance with the leading bass, who was in Porson's employ; the coolness of his own warden, who was under pecuniary obligations to Porson; the violent editorials in the parish magazine; the refusal of various cottagers, who were tenants of Porson's, to see the vicar or take the magazine. There had been the affair of the surplices; the affair of the church school treat; the affair of the church decorations; the gradual emptying of the church; the letters to the rural dean, the archdeacon, and, finally, to the bishop; and now as a climax to trouble and soreness came this

threatened mortification of the Easter offering.

"Linoleum—liar!" Mrs. Phillips's chin sank upon her breast.

Then she looked up as she heard a step upon the gravel. She dared not rise to greet her husband, for to move would be to wake the baby, and equally certainly if she allowed him to come to the window without warning he would wake it—he had a genius for waking the baby—while to hold up a cautionary finger would annoy him, for he was sensitive on the subject. She did the easiest thing, and waited.

"What, indoors, my dear Alice, on a morning like this!" he cried, in tones to wake a congregation on a summer evening. "No wonder you look washed out. You take too little exercise."

"I'll take him to nurse, dear," she replied; and went upstairs with the walling infant. Then she put on her hat, and came down with a smile.

"Yes, I should like a turn in the garden," she said. "We'll see how the new rose-trees look."

"Roses," he said impatiently, "roses! I'm afraid I haven't the heart for things of that sort. That man Porson's been at me again." He raised his combative chin and knit his stormy eyebrows as he spoke.

"It is trying for you!"

Considering that Mrs. Phillips had been married for ten years the remark had a wonderfully fresh ring of sympathy about it.

"It's about this Easter offering, you know. The Bishop has been fussing about it in the diocesan magazine, sending letters to all the churchwardens. Bad taste, I consider, his being in such a hurry to reform things, just coming into the diocese. Such a young man, too!"

"It sounds rather fussy and tiresome. Still, it would hardly do to thwart him, would it?"

"Thwart him," he declaimed passion-

ately; "there's no question of thwarting him. But if I, as a man of private means—and I'm supposed to have private means—can do without the offering, if I prefer that the offertory should go to some charity as hitherto, what right has the Bishop to interfere? The sooner he understands that the clergy of this diocese are not to be managed, and dictated to, and rough-ridden at his pleasure the better for the diocese. I am sorry that it should fall upon me to tell him so, very sorry, but—"

"Even supposing he is overbearing and tactless, dear," she interrupted gently.

"He's perpetually being cried up as the very opposite," he grumbled.

"Yes; well, even supposing everybody's wrong," she pleaded, knitting a bewildered brow, "still, it would be a pity to quarrel with him. He's not been unpleasant to you yet, has he?"

"Who's talking about quarrelling with him?" he cried impatiently. "It's merely a question of defending my rights against the Bishop and Porson."

She had to swallow some tears before she could ask: "What has Mr. Porson done?"

"Well, when he suggested the thing to me some weeks ago, I demurred; I said it was perfectly ridiculous."

"Yes, dear, I remember."

"Then he wrote to the Bishop, and got that week-kneed fool, Rankin, to sign it." (Rankin was vicar's warden.) "He showed me a copy of the letter. They said that I had raised an objection to the offering on the grounds that I had private means, and the people were poor. They were much distressed at this, and wished I could fall in with the Bishop's wishes. Well, the Bishop wrote back—I saw the letter. He said that he respected and understood my feelings, but that he thought it would be better if I could be persuaded to accept the offertory. It was a thing he could not insist upon (I should think

not, indeed!) and thought it was a matter for pleasant persuasion on their part. The folly of it, the utter folly of it!"

"Was Mr. Porson unpleasant?" timidly.

"Oh, no, there was no need for that; and he was much too clever to be openly disagreeable. But I got this letter from his lordship this morning." He put a letter into her hand. "Read it!" he snorted.

She read a courteous letter, in which the Bishop stated that he had had a letter from the churchwardens, and gave a softened description of its contents. He said that he was sorry they had thought it necessary to refer to him, but that he thought it was a pity to oppose the wishes of the congregation in a matter which might be the means of showing that they had ceased to feel ill-will towards their vicar, and gave his reasons for wishing the Easter offering to be generally observed.

Mrs. Phillips was too practised in diplomacy to wonder where the offence lay. She said gently:

"Of course, he may think that the other letters he wrote to you and Mr. Porson really did some—what I mean is, he may not have heard about the church stove or the clothing club, and thinks things are all right."

"He has yet to learn"—Mr. Phillips spoke in tones of kindly patience—"that by trying to please both parties in a dispute you please neither. What did these wonderful letters amount to? Nothing more or less than: You'd better make friends."

"I think perhaps he did mean to be kind. People don't always give the advice one wants, do they? What are you going to do about the letter, dear? There seems something almost a little bit nice about the tone of it."

Mrs. Phillips dared not commit herself to more definite charity.

"I'm afraid I'm not in the humor to appreciate the niceness of the tone. The utter tactlessness, the absolute discourtesy of writing to me the day *after* he had written to the churchwardens! The man must be mad!"

"Perhaps he was busy the day he wrote to Mr. Porson. I expect he is sometimes."

"Oh, I dare say! To hear these bishops talk nowadays one would think no one else was busy. He's *too* busy, that's about it."

"Yes; but, dear, if you could overlook this, and not be too vexed with him about it. After all he is a bishop, and we mustn't forget the children. You don't think," she sounded very wistful, "that you could go to see him, do you? You've never met him privately, have you? And from what people say I should think you would get on with him; he seems a clever man. And, you see, you could tell him all about Mr. Porson, and why he really wants this offering, and how cruel he is. I dare say the Bishop has been tactless and stupid, but I'm sure if he knew everything he would feel for you. When I met him at the Fosters I thought he looked as if he had a kind heart; and though he isn't married, I'm sure he's a really Christian man."

"I couldn't, Alice; I couldn't bring myself to confide in a man who has allowed himself to be hoodwinked by Porson. The humiliation of it!"

"It couldn't be worse than the offering will be," she gasped; and then, after a pause: "And what did you say to Mr. Porson?"

"We weren't able to finish talking it out; but I said to him: 'The truth is, you want to force me to leave.' And do you know what he actually had the face to say?"

"Oh, don't tell me, Edward!" she cried, bursting into tears; "I can't bear it. I love you so much. And

we can't leave; we can't afford to. Where should we go."

"No, of course we can't leave," he replied gloomily. "But never mind, my dear," and a light of obstinate hope lit his eye. "If I *do* consent to have this offertory, I shouldn't be at all surprised if Porson finds, after all, that I'm not so unpopular in the parish as he thinks. I'm not at all sure whether the result won't be something of a disappointment to him."

"Perhaps it will," she said cheerfully, and kissed him. She did not think it would for a moment; she marvelled that he could; but she gathered that the offering was to be, and as the alternative had been to teach the Bishop a lesson, she was relieved.

II.

Mr. Porson did not anticipate any disappointment from the Easter offering. When he left his vicar that morning after a really ably conducted interview, he was in good spirits. All that he had "actually had the face to say" had been that if Mr. Phillips did feel obliged to leave Cottington it was entirely his own doing. This might be unjust and untrue, but it was not insolent, and was entirely in keeping with the rôle adopted in his letter to the Bishop, of the man who was doing his best for a difficult vicar. He was pleased with himself for his skilful command of his temper; he was still more pleased at the prospect of the *flasco* the offering would prove.

Mr. Porson was a farmer's son of Cottington, who by hard work and business capacity as accountant and as auctioneer had made himself a nice little fortune, avoiding any risk of having it squandered by wife or child. His range of ideas was limited; he had bought a house in his native place twenty years before, and had lived in it week in week out ever since. He

was fond of his money, though miserly rather from education than from passion. He was very fond of his respectability and of his position in the village; but what he loved, as a man may love a child, or a hobby, was a grievance. To find that some one had been trespassing, or that he had been overcharged, that the railway company or the sanitary inspector had made a mistake or been remiss, brought a sparkle to his eye, elasticity to his step. When he was not engaged in putting something or some one to rights he was dull; but it is needless to say that Mr. Porson was rarely dull, and wonderfully vigorous for his sixty years. He ought to have been grateful to the vicar; for there can be no doubt that if Mr. Phillips had apologized to him for his first loss of temper and endeavored to be friends he would have been sorry. He had treated the quarrel like an episcure. He had made the very most of it; he had nursed it, fed it, stimulated it. He had conducted it with remarkable address. If the vicar were in the right in this or that dispute, no one in the parish dared think so now; his angry mistakes outweighed his occasional justification for anger.

Mr. Porson was very happy; he felt ten years younger than his age. He had been told on various occasions that he was petty, limited, provincial, fond of money, of red tape, and of his own dignity; he had seen the parson smile at those lapses of the letter "h" to which his eloquence was liable; but when he thought of the exquisite humiliation that Easter Day held in store for the sensitive pride of his enemy, he stroked his beard softly, and took a glass of port with his supper.

"Now I regard an Easter offering in this light; it's either a vote of confidence in a vicar, or it's a vote of censure. What the opinion of bishops may be in the matter I cannot undertake to say, but that's my opinion."

Mr. Porson was fingering a greasy pack of cards as he spoke, sitting in his dingy little dining-room playing whist with the schoolmaster and the vicar's warden. They played there three times a week, and Mr. Porson was invariably allowed the dummy partner.

"There's something in that, no doubt," assented the schoolmaster. "Still, it seems a bit rough on the parson when you look at it in one way. Not that I can afford to be handsome." He looked at his cards doubtfully. It was a bold speech.

"It's better for the parson, it's better for all concerned, that he should know where he is and what it's come to. What's the use of a man 'ugging false comfort to himself. Got no spades, Mr. Rankin?"

"Beg pardon, Mr. Porson," said his fellow-warden. "What you say is true; but I've reason to think that the vicar is not near so well off as he seems; and, as a father myself—well, I don't think much to the vicar, but I'm sorry for his wife and bits o' children."

"If a man talks about having private means in order to flout the bishop and his churchwardens, he's no business to complain whatsoever if he's taken at his word by the parish. As to his wife and children, one may be sorry for them if their father is extravagant and unpopular, but what we have to consider—what I have considered—is not Mr. Phillips as a private person, but Mr. Phillips as vicar of this parish. My trick, I think, Mr. Rankin."

III.

If there had been any one to watch Mrs. Phillips carefully during the day following, while she was teaching her children, playing with them, mending for them, calling in the parish, presiding at the mother's meeting, listening to her husband preach at the special Holy

Week service in the nearly empty church, talking cheerfully to him before and afterwards, there would have been observed a look of fixed resolution on her gentle face. At supper she announced her intention of going into Saintsbury next day to see the dentist; and later, when Mr. Phillips was preparing his Good Friday sermon, and she had gone upstairs to bed, she sat by her dressing-table with an old-fashioned bracelet set with pearls in her hands and with tears in her eyes.

Mrs. Phillips had the sort of conscientious regard for truth which forbade her to say that she was "not at home" if she had a bad headache, and she had resolved to commit a serious deception; yet the tears were not caused by remorse but by the thought of parting with her dead mother's bracelet. She only felt vaguely unhappy about the moral aspect of the question. She was going to do evil that good might come, which St. Paul declared to be reprehensible; but then St. Paul was not married, and he did not know the difficulties of a Mr. Porson. Besides which Mrs. Phillips had decidedly sadly long ere his that she could not call herself seriously religious. When the sun went down so often upon her wrath against Mr. Porson; when she caught herself wishing every time he coughed that he might be found consumptive and have to live in South Africa; when the sight of the church made her shiver as at the symbol of unhappiness from which there was no escape; when Sunday and its services were a weekly terror, it was very clear that all could not be well with her soul.

It was only after the bracelet had been made into a neat little packet and hidden from sight, and she knelt down by her bedside, that the thought of this weighed upon her—it often did at such times—lest her unworthiness should stand in the way of the blessings she pleaded for her dear ones. But if God

knew everything, He must know that it was not easy to be religious if you were a clergyman's wife. As she knelt on, worn out in body and mind in the midst of her apologetic, helpless prayers, it was left to God Himself to say Amen.

IV.

Mrs. Phillips generally dreaded her husband's home-coming after divine service; but her heart had never sunk as it did when she heard his footstep in the hall that Easter Day as she sat with the children round her waiting his arrival to begin dinner. What would he say? Supposing Mr. Porson had found out! But he came in humming the tune of one of the hymns, and he kissed her as he greeted her, and informal kisses were rare in these days of absorption, so that she gathered he was in good spirits.

He talked pleasantly to the children for a time and gave her leisure to compose herself.

"Poor old Porson is out of spirits," he said at length.

"Is he?" she asked brightly. "Why?"

"The offertory was £3 12s.," he chuckled.

"I am glad," she cried. She was indeed. Only twelve shillings!

"Rather funny! Three pounds sent in notes in a letter anonymously to the churchwardens: 'For the vicar, in token of the respect and appreciation of some of his parishioners.' An illiterate hand. I told you Porson would be disappointed," triumphantly.

"Yes, you did. It is nice," she said nervously; very busily cutting roast mutton into small portions for the youthful Cyril.

"Porson thought it most 'extraordinary' and 'mysterious.' He almost might have thought I had sent it myself."

"He doesn't think that?" with a gasp.

"No. I think even Porson is hardly

equal to that! I told him I saw nothing extraordinary in the way it was given; *timid* perhaps; but I thought it would take a good deal of courage to put half-a-crown openly into the plate. I thought I scored there."

"Yes, dear, so you did, didn't you?"

"I'm wondering how I shall put it in the magazine. Whether just stating the total amount of the offering, or say how it was given."

Mrs. Phillips turned pink. "Oh! wouldn't you just state the total. Wouldn't mentioning the letter sound—not exactly bumptious; but you know what I mean?"

"Oh, of course I should prefer ignoring the letter; only that the mention of it would emphasize the fact that people who bear me no ill-will are terrorized into hiding their feelings."

Mrs. Phillips shuddered. Her husband was very fond of emphasizing facts, the chief fact emphasized being his own unpopularity.

"Yes, only I think the—the people who gave the money might not quite like it," she suggested faintly; adding: "I should like to see the envelope."

"Oh, there was nothing to see; I left it in the vestry. Poor old Porson!"

Mr. Porson was certainly very much annoyed by the anonymous gift. Annoyed almost to the verge of being conscience-stricken. But his conscience was used to parrying attacks, and the field was soon left clear to suspicion. On Wednesday morning he walked up the vicarage drive with a buoyant step and the brisk youthfulness which always boded ill to some one.

The vicar was out. He would see Mrs. Phillips.

Directly her visitor was announced, Mrs. Phillips knew that her secret was discovered. How foolish to have thought that Mr. Porson would not find it out at once!

She barely answered his civilities about the weather.

"Did you want to see the vicar?" she asked.

"No, Mrs. Phillips," he said gravely, "I wanted to see you. I have come to speak to you on a matter of very serious importance." He paused, but she said nothing, and he drew an envelope out of his pocket. "You will have heard," he continued with a gently perceptible sneer, "of the anonymous contribution of £3 to the Easter offertory. Knowing, as we do know, that there are not many of the parishioners who could afford to give so much as half-a-crown even to a popular vicar, the matter struck us with some surprise: I will go further, Mrs. Phillips, and say with some suspicion."

"Really," she said indifferently, from white lips, "you often suspect things, don't you?"

"Unfortunately, I say unfortunately, it is often my business."

"Well?" she said hopelessly.

"Well, Mrs. Phillips, it is a remarkable fact that every one in the village seems to wonder where the money came from; it is a remarkable fact that the postal orders were issued at a Saintsbury post office, and dated a day you were known to have been in that city; it is a curious fact, very curious, that the paper they were folded in is a paper of precisely the same description as the paper on which the Vicar wrote to me a week ago." He held the two bits of paper up to the light. "The water-mark on both is the same."

She did not look at the papers. "Yes, I did it," she said quietly.

He was annoyed at so spiritless a surrender; her voice was almost nonchalant.

"You do not seem aware, Madam," he said solemnly, "that in attempting this deception you have committed a very serious offence, not a felony exactly or a forgery, but a fraud; a fraud of a serious nature that might get your husband into trouble."

"My husband?" she gasped; "but I did it."

"You would not find it very easy to convince people that Mr. Phillips had not been a party to it."

"But no one, even people who are unjust to him, could think he could have had anything to do with a thing of this sort?"

Mr. Porson bowed sarcastically. "You are not very complimentary to yourself, Mrs. Phillips."

"But that is quite different," she cried. "I may have been wrong to do what I did, and no doubt it was very foolish; but I am not the vicar."

"No; but you are his wife. And allow me to say that if the matter were brought into the Law Courts, no one would believe that you had not been his accomplice."

This was skilful. He did not say that the matter could or would be brought into the Law Courts, he merely suggested to her probable ignorance that it might be brought there.

"What are you going to do?" she asked.

The weak and foolish of this world have a way of their own of coming to the point sometimes, which is a little confounding to the wise. He almost stammered as he said: "I am not proposing to do anything at the present moment, except to urge upon you the propriety, the necessity I might say, of Mr. Phillips leaving Cottingham. Between ourselves, he ought to have felt the necessity of such a step long before this. This has brought matters to a climax, that is all."

"But he cannot—I mean I am sure he will not leave."

"I am sorry to be unpleasant, Mrs. Phillips, very sorry; but I think Mr. Phillips may find it necessary to change his opinion. Bear in mind that the Bishop is aware of the state of the case at Cottingham."

"You have told him about this?"

Mr. Porson's sense of humor was very small, otherwise he must have smiled to himself at the simplicity of the question. But his voice was gravely suggestive of judgments to come as he replied: "No; not yet."

Mrs. Phillips supported her trembling figure against the mantel-shelf and turned upon the man in a passion of anger; the passion that does not seek to move or argue, but that must speak out, however futile the speaking is certain to be.

"Why are you a churchwarden?" she cried; "you do not love God. You do not love any one. You are cruel. You have no wife or little children. You have no pity."

Anticipations of the Day of Judgment are not pleasant. However successfully Mr. Porson might put the pronouncement aside later on as the spite of an hysterical woman, for the moment he quailed. He took up his hat and moved towards the door. But Mrs. Phillips was there before him, and laid her hand upon the door-knob.

"Have you told any one what you think?" she asked.

"It is not my habit," he replied stiffly, "to publish facts before I am certain that they are facts."

"Will you promise me this," she pleaded; "not to take any steps for three days?"

"Very well, Mrs. Phillips, neither is it my custom to disoblige one of your sex if I can possibly avoid it."

When he had left the house she returned to the drawing-room and sat for some time buried in wretched thought, till, as she was gazing tearfully at the various beloved objects in that room which, by her ill-considered action, she might soon be able to call hers no longer, her eye fell on a picture postcard of the Bishop stuck into the mirror. A light of determination chased the tears away.

"I will go to see the Bishop," she said

to herself. "If Mr. Porson tells him, I will tell him first. I have evidently been very wicked. He will be very shocked; but he must be sorry for Edward. I will go to-morrow."

V.

The Bishop was filling his pipe after lunch and looking a little ruefully at a letter which his chaplain had just laid on the table beside him.

"I suppose," he said with a sigh, "that one ought not to grumble at getting a letter that is so certain to be tiresome as a letter from Vivian when the letter comes alone. One ought to regard it as a staying of the rough wind in the day of the east wind. What's he going to worry about now? I hold you responsible for him, Dobson, as he was a college friend of yours."

"Hardly a friend, I should have said," objected the chaplain with a smile. "I think he wants to leave Hansford. He has been restless since he came into his money."

"Never mind," opening the letter, "I feel equal to anything this afternoon; almost equal to Porson *v.* Phillips."

When he had read the letter through he laughed.

"Well, it's more funny than tiresome. As you said, he wants to leave Hansford. He has not been well for some time, and now he finds that his house is on clay. He would be willing to take a poor living if the soil were better. His views, as I know—Why should I?—are not narrow; he would be willing to fall in with the traditions of a place. Now why apply to me? Why not advertise in the Church papers 'Incumbent of country living worth £350 and house, &c., wants to exchange. Income no object. E. P. or black gown as desired, provided vicarage on gravel.' The futility of it!"

A servant entered and handed him

a card. When the door was closed again he threw it down on the table with a groan.

"I said I felt equal to Phillips and Porson: I do. I could knock their heads together without remorse. But Mrs. Phillips! This is hard lines! I met her once, I remember. A pretty, pathetic-looking little woman." He laid aside his pipe and rose out of his easy chair. "In the future when you hear me say that a married clergy is a blessed institution and all the rest of it, bear in mind that I don't mean a word of it!"

A few pleasant remarks of the Bishop's were not enough to make Mrs. Phillips at her ease; but they gave her time to reassure herself that he had a kind face at the moment at any rate, whatever it might look when her story was told.

"I won't waste your time," she said; "but may I ask, my lord, whether you have had a letter from Mr. Porson in the last few days?"

"No," with a smile; "he thinks, perhaps, that I am entitled to an Easter holiday."

Mrs. Phillips had been married too long not to smile as a matter of course when a man smiled; but her smile was a little thin.

"I am afraid I have done very wrong," she said, making a brave effort to steady her voice. "I am afraid my husband will suffer for it. I don't think it was a forgery, but I think it was something like a felony or a fraud."

She paused, and the Bishop said "Yes?" Perhaps, because Mrs. Phillips looked so much the reverse of fraudulent, and her voice was so low and sweet, the "Yes" was doubtful and kindly and encouraged her to go on.

"It was about the Easter offering. When your lordship said in the diocesan magazine that you wished the custom to be revived, we knew it would be

very awkward for us. You will know perhaps that my husband is not very popular in the parish?" The Bishop had inferred something of the sort. "We thought that, perhaps, if we did not have one, it would not be found—that nothing would come of it."

"Quite so," said the Bishop in a voice that threw the authority of his office to the winds.

And then she went on to explain Mr. Porson's attitude; the impossibility of their leaving Cottington; the loss of their money through an unfortunate investment. She said far more than she had supposed she would say, than she would have dreamed she would have had the courage to say; but though the bishop said little, there was a compelling sympathy in his manner and presence, and she could not be as frightened as her position demanded, nor as secretive as was her wont.

"I don't suppose this is any excuse for what I did; but I couldn't bear the thought of the pain the smallness of the offering would be to my husband, and I had £3 of my own, and I put the money into an envelope and sent it to the churchwardens, and wrote on it: 'For the Vicar as a mark of appreciation and respect from some of his parishioners.'" Her head was bent very low. "I know it was very wrong, but it didn't seem so then; and he was so pleased." Her voice broke, and she gave a little sob.

The Bishop examined his finger-tips very carefully, then he cleared his throat and said: "As to how far you were wrong it is not for me to judge; but I do venture to think that with the blessing of such a love as yours, Mr. Phillips ought to be happy in any parish." His voice was not quite so steady as usual. "Your husband has not guessed this?" he went on.

"No," she said, "at least I hope he has not. Mr. Porson promised me he would take no steps for three days."

"Mr. Porson guessed, I suppose, that you had sent the money? Did he tell you that you had committed a serious offence, a forgery or a felony?"

He rubbed his chin softly. There was something in the tone of the question that made Mrs. Phillips think that this pleasant man would not always be pleasant to talk to.

"Yes," she replied, "he came to me yesterday. He had found out in some clever way. I don't think he had told any one, and he promised me he would not tell you or take steps for three days. He said it might get Mr. Phillips into great trouble. I thought perhaps that you could help him, and tell me what I ought to do."

"It was very kind of you to think that," he said gratefully. Then after a moment's reflection: "If Mr. Porson has not made mischief already, I think I might prevent his doing so. Then, if you would tell Mr. Phillips the whole story, I should like to see him and talk things over with him."

She murmured something grateful, and he went on. "Is your husband strong? Is Cottington healthy? You are not on clay, I think?"

"No," she said surprised, "I think our house is on gravel or sand, I am not sure which."

"If your husband could leave Cottington, no doubt it would be better altogether. But now tell me," he spoke in a tone almost apologetic; "Mr. Porson is, I am sure, a very irritating, and I am afraid a somewhat unscrupulous man; but do you think you could possibly persuade Mr. Phillips that always, everywhere, it takes two to make a quarrel?"

"No," she said, shaking her head. "I don't think I could. He is clever, of course, and I am only a woman"; and then looking up at him with a tremulous little smile—"but I think *you* might."

"Dodson," said the Bishop half an

hour later, "write to Vivian for me, and tell him that I think I might procure him a living, £250, nice neighborhood, I forget the views, vicarage on gravel, if he could secure that I had the appointment to the clay. Also write to Mr. Porson that I should much like to see him if convenient to-morrow

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at three. You look surprised. Look here! I've been a bishop for nearly two years, and during that time I have never either directly or by implication called any one a nasty beast. I am going to lay aside this reserve to-morrow or Friday, to-morrow by preference, at three o'clock precisely."

FROM A COLLEGE WINDOW.

XI.

I was staying the other day in the house of an old friend, a public man, who is a deeply interesting character, energetic, able, vigorous, with very definite limitations. The only male guest in the house, it so happened, was also an old friend of mine, a serious man. One night, when we were all three in the smoking-room, our host rose, and excused himself, saying that he had some letters to write. When he was gone, I said to my serious friend: "What an interesting fellow our host is! He is almost more interesting because of the qualities that he does not possess, than because of the qualities that he does possess." My companion, who is remarkable for his power of blunt statement, looked at me gravely, and said: "If you propose to discuss our host, you must find some one else to conduct the argument; he is my friend, whom I esteem and love, and I am not in a position to criticize him." I laughed, and said: "Well, he is my friend, too, and I esteem and love him; and that is the very reason why I should like to discuss him. Nothing that either you or I could say would make me love him less; but I wish to understand him. I have a very clear impression of him, and I have no doubt you have a very clear impression too; yet we should probably differ from him in many points, and I should like to see what light you could throw upon his char-

acter." My companion said: "No; it is inconsistent with my idea of loyalty to criticize my friends. Besides, you know I am an old-fashioned person, and I disapprove of criticizing people altogether. I think it is a violation of the ninth commandment; I do not think we are justified in bearing false witness against our neighbor."

"But you beg the question," I said, "by saying '*false witness*.' I quite agree that to discuss people in a malicious spirit, or in a spirit of mockery, with the intention of exaggerating their faults and making a grotesque picture of their foibles, is wrong. But two just persons, such as you and I are, may surely talk over our friends, in what Mr. Chadband called a spirit of love?" My companion shook his head. "No," he said, "I think it is altogether wrong. Our business is to see the good points of our friends, and to be blind to their faults." "Well," I said, "then let us 'praise him soft and low, call him worthiest to be loved,' like the people in the '*Princess*.' You shall make a panegyric, and I will say 'Hear, hear!'" "You are making a joke out of it," said my companion, "and I shall stick to my principles—and you won't mind my saying," that I think your tendency is to criticize people much too much. You are always discussing people's faults, and I think it ends in your having a lower estimate of human nature than is either kind or necessary.

To-night, at dinner, it made me quite melancholy to hear the way in which you spoke of several of our best friends." "Not leaving Lancelot brave nor Galahad pure!" I said; "in fact you think that I behaved like the ingenious demon in the Acts, who always seems to me to have had a strong sense of humor. It was the seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, was it not, who tried to exorcise an evil spirit? But he 'leapt upon them and overcame them, so that they fled out of the house naked and wounded.'" You mean that I use my friends like that, strip off their reputations, belabor them, and leave them without a rag of virtue or honor?" My companion frowned, and said: "Yes; that is more or less what I mean, though I think your illustration is needlessly profane. My idea is that we ought to make the best of people, and try as far as possible to be blind to their faults." "Unless their fault happens to be criticism?" I said. My companion turned to me very solemnly, and said: "I think we ought not to be afraid, if necessary, of telling our friends about their faults; but that is quite a different thing from amusing one's self by discussing their faults, with others." "Well," I said, "I believe that one is in a much better position to speak to people about their faults, if one knows what they are; and personally I think I arrive at a juster view both of my friends' faults and virtues by discussing them with others. I think one takes a much fairer view by seeing the impression that one's friends make on other people; and I think that I generally arrive at admiring my friends more by seeing them reflected in the mind of another, than I do when they are merely reflected in my own mind. Besides, if one is possessed of critical faculties, it seems to me absurd to rule out one part of life, and that, perhaps, the most important—one's fellow-beings, I mean—

and to say that one is not to exercise the faculty of criticism there. You would not think it wrong, for instance, to criticize books?" "No," said my companion, "certainly not. I think that it is not only legitimate, but a duty, to bring one's critical faculties to bear on books; it is one of the most valuable methods of self-education." "And yet books are nothing but an expression of an author's personality," I said. "Would you go so far as to say that no one has no business to criticize one's friends' books?" "You are only arguing for the sake of arguing," said my companion. "With books it is quite different; they are a public expression of a man's opinions, and consequently they are submitted to the world for criticism." "I confess," I said, "that I do not think the distinction is a real one. I feel sure one has a right to criticize a man's opinions, delivered in conversation; and I think that much of our lives is nothing but a more or less public expression of ourselves. Your position seems to me no more reasonable than if a man were to say: 'I look upon the whole world and all that is in it as the work of God; and I am not in a position to criticize any of the works of God.' If one may not criticize the character of a friend whom one esteems and loves, surely, *a fortiori*, we ought not to criticize anything in the world at all. The whole of ethics, the whole of religion, is nothing else than bringing our critical faculties to bear upon actions and qualities; and it seems to me that if our critical faculty means anything at all, we are bound to apply it to all the phenomena we see about us." My companion said disdainfully that I was indulging in the merest sophistry, and that he thought that we had better go to bed, which we presently did.

I have, since this conversation, been reflecting about the whole subject, and

I am not inclined to admit that my companion was right. In the first place, if every one were to follow the principle that one had no business to criticize one's friends, it would end in being deplorably dull. Imagine the appalling ponderosity of a conversation in which one felt bound to praise every one who was mentioned. Think of the insensate chorus which would arise. "How tall and stately A— is! How sturdy and compact B— is! Then there is dear C—; how wise, judicious, prudent, and sensible! And the excellent D—, what candor, what impulsiveness! E—, how worthy, how business-like! Yes, how true that is! How thankful we should be for the examples of A—, B—, C—, D—, and E—!" A very little of such conversation would go a long way. How it would refresh and invigorate the mind! What a field for humor and subtlety it would open up!

It may be urged that we ought not to regulate our conduct upon the basis of trying to avoid what is dull; but I am myself of opinion that dullness is responsible for a large amount of human error and misery. Readers of *The Pilgrim's Progress* will no doubt remember the young woman whose name was *Dull*, and her choice of companions—*Simple*, *Sloth*, *Presumption*, *Short-mind*, *Slow pace*, *No-heart*, *Linger-after-lust*, and *Sleepy-head*. These are the natural associates of *Madam Dull*. The danger of dullness, whether natural or acquired, is the danger of complacently lingering among stupid and conventional ideas, and losing all the bright interchange of the larger world. The dull people are not, as a rule, the simple people—they are generally provided with a narrow and self-sufficient code; they are often entirely self-satisfied, and apt to disapprove of everything that is lively, romantic, and vigorous. Simplicity, as a rule, is either a natural gift, or else can be attained only by

people of strong critical powers, who will, firmly, and vigorously, test, examine, and weigh motives, and arrive through experience at a direct and natural method of dealing with men and circumstances. True simplicity is not an inherited poverty of spirit; it is rather like the poverty of one who has deliberately discarded what is hampering, vexatious and unnecessary, and has learnt that the art of life consists in disentangling the spirit from all conventional claims, in living by trained impulse and fine instinct, rather than by tradition and authority. I do not say that the dull people are not probably, in a way, the happier people; I suppose that anything that leads to self-satisfaction is, in a sense, a cause of happiness; but it is not a species of happiness that people ought to pursue.

Perhaps one ought not to use the word dullness, because it may be misunderstood. The kind of dullness of which I speak is not inconsistent with a high degree, not only of practical, but even of mental, ability. I know several people of very great intellectual power who are models of dullness. Their memories are loaded with what is no doubt very valuable information, and their conclusions are of the weightiest character; but they have no vivid perception, no alertness, they are not open to new ideas, they never say an interesting or a suggestive thing; their presence is a load on the spirits of a lively party, their very facial expression is a rebuke to all light-mindedness and triviality. Sometimes these people are silent, and then to be in their presence is like being in a thick mist; there is no outlook, no enlivening prospect. Sometimes they are talkers; and I am not sure that that is not even worse, because they generally discourse on their own subjects with profound and serious conviction. They have no power of conversation, because they are not interested in any one else's point of

view; they care no more who their companions are than a pump cares what sort of a vessel is put under it—they only demand that people should listen in silence. I remember not long ago meeting one of the species, in this case an antiquarian. He discoursed continuously, with a hard eye, fixed as a rule upon the table, about the antiquities of the neighborhood. I was on one side of him, and was far too much crushed to attempt resistance. I ate and drank mechanically: I said "Yes" and "very interesting" at intervals; and the only ray of hope upon the horizon was that the hands of the clock upon the mantelpiece did undoubtedly move, though they moved with leaden slowness. On the other side of the great man was a lively talker, Matthews by name, who grew very restive under the process. The great man had selected Dorchester as his theme, because he had unhappily discovered that I had recently visited it. My friend Matthews, who had been included in the audience, made desperate attempts to escape; and once, seeing that I was fairly grappled, began a conversation with his next neighbor. But the antiquary was not to be put off. He stopped, and looked at Matthews with a relentless eye. "Matthews," he said, "*Matthews!*" raising his voice. Matthews looked round. "I was saying that Dorchester was a very interesting place." Matthews made no further attempt to escape, and resigned himself to his fate.

Such men as the antiquary are certainly very happy people; they are absorbed in their subject, and consider it to be of immense importance. I suppose that their lives are, in a sense, well spent, and that the world is in a way the gainer by their labors. My friend the antiquary has certainly, according to his own account, proved that certain ancient earthworks near Dorchester are of a date at least five hundred years anterior to the received date.

It took him a year or two to find out, and I suppose that the human race has benefited in some way or other by the conclusion; but, on the other hand, the antiquary seems to miss all the best things of life. If life is an educative process, people who have lived and loved, who have smiled and suffered, who have perceived beautiful things, who have felt the rapturous and bewildering mysteries of the world—well, they have learnt something of the mind of God, and, when they close their eyes upon the world, take with them an alert, a hopeful, an inquisitive, an ardent spirit, into whatever may be the next act of the drama; but my friend the antiquary, when he crosses the threshold of the unseen, when he is questioned as to what has been his relation to life, will have seen and perceived, and learnt nothing, except the date of the Dorchester earthworks and similar monuments of history.

And of all the shifting pageant of life, by far the most interesting and exquisite part is our relations with the other souls who are bound on the same pilgrimage. One desires ardently to know what other people feel about it all—what their points of view are, what their motives are, what are the data on which they form their opinions—so that to cut off the discussion of other personalities on ethical grounds is like any other stiff and Puritanical attempt to limit interests, to circumscribe experience, to maim life. The criticism, then, or the discussion, of other people is not so much a *cause* of interest in life, as a *sign* of it; it is no more to be suppressed by codes or edicts than any other form of temperamental activity. It is no more necessary to justify the habit than it is necessary to give good reasons for eating or for breathing; the only thing that it is advisable to do, is to lay down certain rules about it, and prescribe certain methods of practising it. The people

who do not desire to discuss others, or who disapprove of doing it, may be pronounced to be, as a rule, either stupid, or egotistical, or Pharisaical; and sometimes they are all three. The only principle to bear in mind is the principle of justice. If a man discusses others spitefully or malevolently, with the sole intention of either extracting amusement out of their foibles, or with the still more odious intention of emphasizing his own virtues by discovering the weakness of others, or with the cynical desire—which is perhaps the lowest of all—of proving the whole business of human life to be a vile and sordid spectacle, then he may be frankly disapproved of, and if possible avoided; but if a man takes a generous view of humanity, if he admires what is large and noble, if he gives full credit for kindness, strength, usefulness, vigor, sympathy, then his humorous perception of faults and deficiencies, of whims and mannerisms, of prejudices and unreasonablenesses, will have nothing that is hard or bitter about it. For the truth is that if we are sure that a man is generous and just, his little mannerisms, his fads, his ways, are what mostly endear him to us. The man of lavish liberality is all the more lovable if he has an intense dislike of cutting the string of a parcel, and loves to fill his drawers with little hanks of twine, the untying of which stands for many wasted hours. If we know a man to be simple-minded, forbearing, and conscientious, we like him all the better when he tells for the fiftieth time an ancient story, prefacing it by anxious inquiries which are smilingly rebutted, as to whether any of his hearers have ever heard the anecdote before.

But we must not let this tendency, to take a man in his entirety, to love him as he is, carry us too far; we must be careful that the foibles that endear him to us are in themselves innocent.

There is one particular form of priggishness, in this matter of criticism of others, which is apt to beset literary people, and more especially at a time when it seems to be considered by many writers that the first duty of a critic—they would probably call him an artist for the sake of the associations—is to get rid of all sense of right and wrong. I was reading the other day a sensible and appreciative review of Mr. Lucas's new biography of Charles Lamb. The reviewer quoted with cordial praise Mr. Lucas's remark—referring, of course, to the gin-and-water, which casts, I fear, in my own narrow view, something of a sordid shadow over Lamb's otherwise innocent life—"A man must be very secure in his own righteousness who would pass condemnatory judgment upon Charles Lamb's only weakness." I do not myself think this a sound criticism. We ought not to abstain from condemning the weakness, we must abstain from condemning Charles Lamb. His beautiful virtues, his tenderness, his extraordinary sweetness and purity of nature far outweigh this weakness. But what are we to do? Are we to ignore, to condone, to praise the habit? Are we to think the better of Charles Lamb and love him more because he tipped? Would he not have been more lovable without it?

And the fact that one may be conscious of similar faults and moral weaknesses ought not to make one more, but less, indulgent to the fault when we see it in a beautiful nature. The fault in question is no more in itself adorable than it is in another man who does not possess Lamb's genius.

We have a perfect right—nay, we do well—to condemn in others faults which we frankly condemn in ourselves. It does not help on the world if we go about everywhere slobbering with forgiveness and affection; it is the most mawkish sentimentality to love people

in such a way that we condone grave faults in them; and to condone a fault because a man is great, when we condemn it if he is not great, is only a species of snobbishness. It is right to compassionate sinners, to find excuse for the faults of every one but ourselves; but we ought not to love so foolishly and irrationally that we cannot even bring ourselves to wish our hero's faults away.

I confess to feeling the most minute and detailed interest in the smallest matters connected with other people's lives and idiosyncrasies. I cannot bear biographies of the dignified order which do not condescend to give what are called personal details, but confine themselves to matters of undoubted importance. When I have finished reading such books I feel as if I had been reading the "Statesman's Year-Book," or the "Annual Register." I have no mental picture of the man; he is merely like one of those bronze statues, in frock-coat and trousers, that decorate our London squares.

I was reading, the other day, an ecclesiastical biography. The subject of it, a high dignitary of the Church, had attended the funeral of one of his episcopal colleagues, with whom he had had several technical controversies. On the evening of the day he wrote a very tender and beautiful account of the funeral in his diary, which is quoted at length: "How little," he wrote, "the sense of difference, and how strong my feeling of his power and solid sense; how little I care that he was wrong about the Discipline Bill, how much that he was so happy with us in the summer; how much that he was, as

all the family told me, so 'devoted' to my Nellie!"

That is a thoroughly human statement, and preserves a due sense of proportion. In the presence of death it is the kindly human relations that matter more than policies and statesmanship.

And so it may be said, in conclusion, that we cannot taste the fulness of life, unless we can honestly say *Nihil humani a me alienum puto*. If we grow absorbed in work, in business, in literature, in art, in policy, to the exclusion of the nearer human elements, we dock and maim our lives. We cannot solve the mystery of this difficult world; but we may be sure of this—that it is not for nothing that we are set in the midst of interests and relationships, of liking and loving, of tenderness and mirth, of sorrow and pain. If we are to get the most and the best out of life, we must not seclude ourselves from these things; and one of the nearest and simplest of duties is the perception of their points of view, of sympathy, in no limited sense; and that sympathy we can only gain through looking at humanity in its wholeness. If we allow ourselves to be blinded by false conscience, by tradition, by stupidity, even by affection, from realizing what others are, we suffer, as we always suffer, from any wilful blindness; indeed, wilful blindness is the most desperate of all faults, perhaps the only one that can hardly be condoned, because it argues a confidence in one's own opinion, a self-sufficiency, a self-estimation, which shut out, as by an opaque and sordid screen, the light of heaven from the soul.

CERTAIN LOVERS IN DICKENS.

There are certain ideas that seem to have had a special fascination for the mind of Dickens. R. A. Proctor pointed out one such idea, going so far as to claim for it, indeed, that it was the novelist's favorite theme. There is another such idea, however, that nobody seems to have pointed out, and yet it recurs again and again with most remarkable persistence: an idea for which Dickens would seem to have had a positive love. It is one common to all novelists, but no one of them has used it to anything like the extraordinary extent that Dickens did. It is the idea of the persistent lover, whose love is hopeless from the first.

Dickens had a particular tenderness for the man who loved and lost; who, though he may have disciplined his heart into acquiescence with the inevitable, still cherished his love, or the memory of it, as something so sacred, so ineffably beautiful, that he was faithful to it all his days. Such an idea of love—idealization if you will—brought a touch of something almost divine into this workaday world. It could not but appeal to the tenderness, the pity, the intense humanity, and the romantic imagination of the novelist. The type of character that embodied it was one particularly near his heart. With his profound knowledge of human nature he knew that the men most prone to this ideal devotion were not the practical, hard-headed men of the world, but those of the simple, innocent, lovable natures that he loved to draw.

However, the persistent lovers whose love is hopeless are not all of this kind, though the majority are. Often as the idea is portrayed, the characters of the lovers are never alike; frequently

most dissimilar; nor is the working out of the idea ever exactly the same thing. Taking Tom Pinch as the best representative of the normal or middle state of the idea in Dickens's mind, we find it like a pendulum swinging through varying degrees and tones of pathos, comicality, and dread, touching absolute farce on the one hand and the intensest tragedy on the other.

One would hardly look for the idea in *Pickwick*, still there is a suggestion of it. It is here an idea purely *pour rire*: Dickens is playing with it, and though he has all its pathos and tragedy up his sleeve, as it were, he is at present only concerned to show us its brightest facet. In the Fat Boy's outspoken admiration of Mary, the pretty housemaid, however, we have the introduction of a love (calf love) that is hopeless from the first. In *Nicholas Nickleby* the idea is presented in a very different guise; here it is one of the most deeply pathetic instances in all Dickens. "Nicholas learnt for the first time that the dying boy (Smike), with all the ardor of a nature concentrated on one absorbing, hopeless secret passion, loved his sister Kate." The idea can hardly be said to play any part in *Oliver Twist*, though there is a suggestion of it in the faithfulness of Mr. Brownlow to the memory of one he loved and lost in early life. In the devotion of the uncouth Kit for the angel-child, Little Nell, we have another instance of it, though owing to their youth it is not developed very seriously; still the use made of it is a very happy one. In *Barnaby Rudge* the idea is wholly farcical. Love is perhaps too good a name to bestow on Mr. Tappertit's desire to possess Dolly; still as he does want her, and plans desperately

to get her, it may perhaps pass. Miggs's love for Tappertit is much in the same vein.

In the example of Tom Pinch (as in Smike's and Sydney Carton's) we find the idea intensified in a way for which Dickens would seem to have reserved his deepest sympathy, his finest tone of tenderness. It is that not only is the love hopeless from the first, but the lover himself quite realizes that it is hopeless. Often in these cases the love is never spoken: so it is with Tom. "Aye, though he loved her from his soul with such a self-denying love as woman seldom wins; he spoke from first to last of Martin. Not the wealth of the rich Indies would have tempted Tom to shirk one mention of her lover's name." In *Dombey and Son* we have the delightful half comic, half pathetic love of Toots for Florence. If poor Toots had been made a less comic figure there would have been something very touching in his unswerving devotion. As it is, we can't help laughing at him, particularly when he comes out with such expressions as, "You know, Captain Gills, I— positively adore Miss Dombey; I—I am perfectly sore with loving her." Yet all the depth of his nature, such as it is, is in his love. In his way he is as true and noble-hearted a gentleman as Tom Pinch.

David Copperfield gives us the idea again, but in sterner mould. Hitherto it has appeared as a minor theme, and though it does not yet occupy the position of being the leading one, it is more dramatically woven into the story than ever before. It is Ham's love for Little Em'ly. For one brief moment, as it were, the sun breaks through the clouds and shines on Ham, only to intensify the gathering darkness afterwards. In *Bleak House* the idea reverts to comicality. The love of Mr. Guppy for Esther would seem to be serious, her image is imprinted on his heart, but the use made of this attach-

ment is purely comic. Owing to his having been brought up "in a sharp school," he is perhaps the most practical business head of any of these lovers. Perhaps we ought to add to the list Mr. Jarndyce's love for Esther: it is just the old idea with a new turn. In *Hard Times* we find it slightly disguised, too, but it is still the old idea. Stephen Blackpool's love for Rachael is returned, but all the same, it is hopeless from the first as regards coming together. Tied to a drunken drab by the marriage law, the meek and gentle workman can make nothing of the situation: it is "aw a muddle," all hopelessness. Hopelessness! How stern a sway this idea had over Dickens' mind! In all these serious examples of it (with one exception) he never relented, but inexorably pursued the situation to its legitimate conclusion: no apostle of "realism" could do more. How easy for the novelist to have killed off the drunken wife and made Stephen happy! But no. It was Stephen that must die, and Rachel is left to weep.

Little Dorrit gives us a lover in Young John Chivery somewhat akin to Toots, but not so broadly comic, the pathos more accentuated. His hopeless devotion to Little Dorrit is really touching, and it develops his originally somewhat foolish and insignificant character into that of a true man. Love ennoble Young John. When Mr. Dorrit is rich, and the poor lover calls on him at the hotel with a bundle of cigars—a very finely written scene—there is a quiet dignity in his tone, in spite of his shock, and in comparison of gentlemanliness, it is not he that suffers, but Mr. Dorrit. In the next novel we come to the supreme example of the idea; Sydney Carton. Here, more than in any other book, the idea is the main theme, and the culmination the most dramatic. That the man, for the love of the woman, was to lay down his life, not to save hers, but to save the one

she loved most dearly, was to give the idea a greater beauty than before, and to carry it to a sublime height that it had never reached, or could never reach again.

In *Great Expectations* we find the one case where Dickens altered his mind as regards this favorite idea. The whole book had been written under the influence of the idea; Pip's love for Estella is of the hopeless order: he is constantly rebuffed, and Dickens meant to leave him solitary at the end. But just at the last, solely because Bulwer Lytton begged him to, he changed his mind. So the lout of a husband is killed off, Pip and Estella made to meet, and says Pip, "I saw no shadow of another parting from her." In *Our Mutual Friend* the idea assumes a darker hue than hitherto. Bradley Headstone's mad and hopeless passion for Lizzie culminates in a murderous attack on the man she loves. In spite of this, in spite of the fact that Dickens has clearly no love for the man, he compels, almost in spite of himself, as it were, some measure of the reader's sympathy for the poor mad wretch. There are few things more powerful and dramatic in all Dickens than the way in which the schoolmaster is goaded to madness and desperation by Eugene in those tragic night walks, when Bradley dogs the other's steps, only to find himself more the hunted than the hunter. The baffled and tormented Bradley going by "like a haggard head suspended in the air: so completely did the force of his expression cancel his figure." What a wonderful description that is! Additional force is given to the idea in this book by a dramatic double use of it: Bradley is himself the object of hopeless love on the part of Miss Peecher.

The idea is one we should hardly expect to find in the shorter stories, for unless it should happen to be the pivot or main idea of the tale, there is, gen-

erally speaking, no room for it. Still, we do find it. In *Mugby Junction* the love of the lonely Mr. Young Jackson for the mother of Polly is an instance. "This was the woman he had loved. This was the woman he had lost. Such had been the constancy of his imagination to her"—and so on. In *The Perils of Certain English Prisoners* the hopeless love of the humble marine, Gill Davis, for Miss Maryon, an officer's sister, is finely portrayed. He keeps loyal to her all his days, and remains "her poor, old, faithful, humble soldier." In *George Silverman's Explanation* the idea is practically the whole story, but it takes a very curious turn. The lover absolutely avoids the love that is offered him, and takes pains to turn it from himself to another object; his motive, of course, being high and noble. "In the knowledge that, I did love her, and that I should love her while my life lasted, and that I was ever to hide my secret deep in my own breast, and she was never to find it, there was a kind of sustaining joy, or pride, or comfort, mingled with my pain."

The working out of the idea in *Edwin Drood* is partly, of course, a matter for conjecture. There are no less than three examples of it. First, the faithful Grewgious, whose secret love is for the dead. Secondly, Neville Landless, whose faithful love is quite as hopeless as that of Grewgious. That he is not to keep at a speechless distance, however (as did Grewgious in his love), is plainly shown from the little picture on the cover, where he is to be seen passionately kissing Rosa's hand, as she sits on a rustic seat. (It is not Jasper, as Mr. Walters has it in his book: no such scene takes place in Jasper's garden interview with Rosa.) Thirdly, there is Jasper, the grimmiest example of hopeless love in the Dickens gallery. Jasper and Neville were finally to clash, Neville's death being the result. Exactly how this was to be worked we

can only surmise. Mr. Walters has it that Neville was to save his sister from the infuriated murderer at the expense of his own life. Saving a sister has never been a dramatic idea yet in either novel or play. Mr. Lang's contention that Neville's life was to be lost in a mere scuffle is equally astray. Far more likely is it that in the clash of two lovers of the hopeless order Dickens would see his way to give this favorite and extensively used theme of his fresh and dramatic effects. In Jasper's pursuit of Rosa, the Drood murder is but incidental. After that has occurred we find Jasper's passion reaching a point of "frightful vehemence" and blazing into threats. We find Rosa shrinking from him, shuddering at him, filled with horror at his mere presence, only feeling safe when she is with friends, or shut away from him by bolts and bars. All this is working up to something. Jasper's last words to her in the garden scene should be particularly noted: "If you

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were to cast me off . . . you would never be rid of me. *No one should come between us. I would pursue you to the death.*"

All this was to culminate, I think, in a personal attack on Rosa. Jasper, at bay, with perhaps, thoughts of suicide, would be consumed by one last dreadful desire—she should die too; vengeance for his own failure must be wreaked on her head: love would turn to hate as it too often has in real life. He would get away from all, and in his flight find Rosa. She would be saved just in the nick of time by Neville, who would lose his own life in doing so. Thus Dickens would give two dramatic and novel turns in one to the old idea. The first—that the lover was to give his life for the woman he loved (and it should be noted that in all these numerous examples Dickens had never before done this exact thing); the second—that another lover's love was to turn to hate and attempted murder of the beloved object.

Willoughby Matchett.

THE VAGABONDS.

The old Adam in all of us has a natural sympathy with the tramp by profession. He seems an institution dating from the vanished days of "rewards and fairies," and in many country places his arrival is awaited with impatience by the residentiary or oldest inhabitant, who wishes to be certified of a change of seasons. The writer, who has also studied the tramps of far countries—the "hobo" of the United States, the "prairie-seed" of Western Canada, the "highways-and-ditches upholsterer" of High Germany, and one or two others—confesses that his sympathy for the English vagabond has often been translated into terms of petty cash. These sins against the

modern organization of charitable relief were perpetrated long years ago in Herefordshire, which then abounded in tramps. In Holy Bush Lane, a long and devious road descending from the red-earth plateau of the county into its richer alluvial flats, at least one of these solitary travellers was always to be met. Invariably he was trickling down into the land of well-to-do farmers and farm laborers able to give away a bite and a sup (there is two shillings of a difference between the wages paid above and those paid below), yet it was generally believed that tramps frequented the lane merely for the pleasure of half-an-hour's downhill travelling. The best-known of the regulars

was one Billy "Big-shoes," who would appear about primrose-time and—from the same point of the compass—when the hum of threshing-machines was a drone note in the year's slumber-song and the land was flowing with cider and home-brewed beer. Of him the ancient farmer, who boasted that he could "stank Pencombe brook wi' goold," said, "Billy's coom in, and we'll see!" Many a shilling was spent on Billy in the hope of eliciting his autobiography, but he would never carry his reminiscences beyond the last market-town in his progress. The truth is that he, like nine in ten English vagrants, had neither a past nor a future; in other words, he was slack-jointed in his mind. Another twice-a-year visitant was a fellow with a sugar-loaf head which he banged noisily with a short thick stick, a performance which always called forth a shower of browns from the patrons of the village public. From a third, one of the few with a true beggar's chant, a silver coin would always draw a panegyric on the open-air life ending with the remark, "Pason dunno, not 'e!" He heartily despised the field-worker's diet, and his point of view has been expressed in verse as follows:—

What's his dinner, if you please?
 The smell can't be mistaken;
 'Tis a lump o' reel Emerican cheese
 And a rag o' nettled bacon.
 A tu'penny meal—including toke;
 Mine'll cost the squire a guinea—
 One wing up and t'other down
 I marked her into yond spinney.

This man may have been a gamekeeper in his regenerate days, for he could always tell you where to find the resting-place of a covey of partridges, as "sad they sleep their watchful mother round," and, to be sure, he turned his knowledge to good account. Last winter the writer met this very man in Regent's Park watching the half-

hearted flighting of the waterfowl with hungry eyes. He had come to live in London, where it is easier for the work-shy to pick up pence than in the country, and it is likely enough that he has been caught for ever in the sorry-go-round of the urban tramp's life. The best place for meeting the urban tramp is Poplar, which has become the base of his circular vagrancy—thanks to the folly of sentimental Guardians. In these days of processions of the unemployed (and the unemployable) the beggars are coming to town with a vengeance.

The German tramp shall be left to Mr. Josiah Flynt and other specialists. He is being crushed out of existence and transmuted into a "colony loafer." Not all the carefully devised apparatus of *Verpflegungs-Stationen* (relief stations) and *Herbergen* (shelters) for men tramping in search of work, and of the agricultural and industrial colonies, thirty-four in number, run on the lines of that established near Bielefeld by Pastor von Bodelschwingh can prevent some more or less obvious expression of the aboriginal sinner's distaste for earning his living. But the time will come, no doubt, when the Teutonic love of tramping which once filled the highways and byways with throngs of students will survive only in such songs as Schumann's rippling lyric of the mill-wheel's message. To-day North America is the paradise of tramps; there and nowhere else in the world—except, perhaps, in Russia—are there orders of vagrancy. As yet it cannot be said that Canada has an organized trampdom. The army of hoboes has, it is true, followed the sporting American millionaire—often an unemployable, from the bright end of the social spectrum invented by Mr. Charles Booth—into the away-back areas of Ontario and Quebec and the hunting-grounds of the Maritime Provinces. The vagrancy of French-Canada has been Americanized

to a sad extent; the *habitant's* pensioner has taken to travelling by rail "on the trucks" (i.e. between the wheels and the body of a passenger-car) and following the camps of navvies, a generous folk on pay-day, as sedulously as his American rival. But the only type of tramp peculiar to Canada is the Western "prairie-seed," who always possesses a horse and sometimes a buckboard. There is generally a drop of Indian blood in him; his inability to utter the sound "sh," not found in Cree parlance, confirms his descent from the Red chivalry. As often as not he is a freighter, whose industry has been killed by the extension of the railway system. He travels from settlement to settlement, as sure of bed and board as the Australian sundowner, to the half-forgotten burden of "Get on, get up, you long-horned prairie-perambulating sons of guns!" (the voice falls on the last word) so often addressed to oxen in the days before the Riel rebellion. The hardest worker among Western farmers does not grudge him the possession of a horse. "I guess the orneriest man has a right to four legs in this country," said a Western Canadian when asked why he relieved a vagabond in possession of horseflesh to the value of several dollars. Now and again one meets a prairie tramp who has used the sea in his time. The Chinook wind has blown these rootless men, unconsidered seeds of humanity, out of the Pacific into Verandrye's inland ocean of grasses, that sighs unto no shore. "Love and the little islands has been the ruination of the Pacific," said one of these vagrants in the tone of a puritanical moralist. He was too old for the loves of Honolulu, which are the cheapest by far, and had fled from the sight of younger men's good fortunes. So much for the fair beginnings of Canadian vagrancy, a subject of sufficient novelty to excuse a digression. As to the American hobo

and his errant orders, ascending by many a stately stair from the "poke-out beggar" or "tomato vag" to the "fawny man," nothing need be said. The whole truth of this matter is set forth in Mr. Flynt's *Tramping with Tramps* which deserves to be ranked with Mr. T. W. Lawson's vivisection of the American Trust, and Mr. Charles Booth's anatomy of living laboring London as a treatise on, shall we say, social pathology? Antæuslike, the modern economist has touched the mother-earth of facts once more, and has risen refreshed for a new struggle with the Herculean destiny of all human societies.

So much for the romance of vagabondage and the light it throws into certain dim recesses of this sublunary life. The historical point of view can be ascertained from the report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, which is really the most interesting Blue-book published for many a long day. Ever since the disintegration of serfdom began in England the authorities have been in two minds as to the right policy of dealing with those affected by the *libido currendi* in a chronic form. Even to-day the police treat the vagrant as a criminal but do not punish him, while the Poor Law treats him as a pauper but does not relieve him. In Chapter III. the Report gives a reasoned catalogue of the chief types of English tramp. The proportion of *bona-fide* working men in search of a job is variously estimated at from 3 per cent. to 1 per cent. (the lowest estimate comes from Mr. W. Crooks, M.P.), the bulk of these employables consisting of navvies on their way to new diggings and sailors crossing from one port to another. Secondly, there are the exiles from the various Paradises of Odd Jobs, of which by far the largest is found in the East End and its down-river prolongations. Then there is the habitual vagrant who sub-

sists on indiscriminate charity, eked out by pickings and stealings, from year's end to year's end. Lastly, there are the old and infirm workers and broken soldiers, many of whom are crazy and capable of only one human passion—fear. Seldom, if ever, is the type of the poet's jovial beggar met in these latter days; almost invariably the tramp, rustic or urban, or a link between town and country, may be described as *sine re, sine spe, sine fide, sine sede*. Clearly the different types demand different treatment. The system of way-tickets would, in the opinion of the Committee, be a great boon to the worker out of work, whose grimy Odyssey has been pictured in the most poignant of Arthur Morrison's tales. For the second class some form of the labor colony or the "work-home" described by Mr. Charles Booth in the last volume of his great work seems the best curative agency, though the Committee evidently regard the former institutions with disfavor. Lunatic asylums and infirmary wards are the proper receptacles for the incapables of the fourth class—at any rate until the victory of Tariff Reform enables us to provide funds for a system of old-age pensions. How to deal with the true-

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blue tramp is still an unsolved problem. The adoption of a common policy by the police and the Poor Law authorities and the co-operation of the charitable would do much to help on his disappearance. Above all the cessation of casual almsgiving is necessary. Thomas Walker, in *The Original*, a book much quoted by the Committee, condemns this ubiquitous abuse in forcible terms:—

First and foremost, the most prolific root of all this [vagrancy] stands that mean and slovenly, disloyal and pernicious vice (for such I have not hesitated to call it), variously characterized as indiscriminate almsgiving, indiscriminate, promiscuous or bastard charity, and dolegiving; the standing temptation and main support of the mendicant and vagrant community. It is this pernicious practice that attracts the imbecile populations of foreign and home growth, and the less insane people who have an innate indisposition to work, an innate fondness for a roving and reckless life; and it is the experience of it that supports these people and keeps them idle.

Let the sentimental almsgiver take warning. He or she is the maker of vagabonds.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

A century—and perhaps no less—gives the needful perspective to a poet, and enables us to assign him his place on the roll of the immortals. Still more is this true of a poetess, perhaps because there are few of her kind, perhaps also because women's personal histories are more inextricably bound up with their work than is the case with men. And now that a hundred years have passed since Elizabeth Barrett Browning's birth, it is easier than before to ap-

praise her for what she was. There are few of those born in the fifties and the sixties who did not feel the glamor of her song while their day was still at the spring. To them she represented youth in its strength and in its weakness; youth with its confident flights towards the sun, its humbled and heavy falls to earth, with its optimism and its morbidness, its scorn of seemings, its power to live by illusion. And when we re-read her poetry by

the light brought by time, it is the person, not the poet, who lives most. Her poetry as poetry is imperfect. She is an incomplete artist, but a complete woman; and it is as a complete woman that she will stand and endure. When we use the word "poet" we mean, of course, a professional poet. Every woman is a poet, and she, who was more intensely woman than other women, was, in this way, a past-mistress of poetry.

The "Sonnets from the Portuguese" remain her masterpiece—a real work of art, because they are the fullest expression of the woman in her; and, better than these, the best poem that she created, was her own life with her husband. This is perhaps the reason why she is comparatively little read by the present generation; the woman of one age seldom speaks to the "business and bosoms" of her followers fifty years later; and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, in her rebellions as much as in her sentiments, was Early Victorian in seeming, although new and untried forces lay below. The lyre is no longer in vogue; it has given place to other instruments more scientific than musical. Authors are not now photographed as they were in the time of long ringlets—as she was—pensive, unassuming, intense, with the Coliseum behind her; for great backgrounds have also gone out of fashion. "E. B. B." lived in the days of great backgrounds; of great causes, and great awakenings—the days of Victor Hugo and Garibaldi; of Kingsley and Carlyle; and the Chartists; of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood; and of fermenting ideas, both in politics and in art. The walls which then fell before trumpets were the walls of respectability—a city which, though rebuilt, has never again occupied the same dominant position. Unconventionality has even become conventional, so that many of the barriers that Elizabeth Barrett Browning made against it

have ceased to interest her less struggling successors. Her attitude to moral questions, to women and to the poor, to art and its relation to Nature, has grown to be the general attitude of cultivated people—so general, indeed, that we are apt to undervalue her as an innovator.

O Magi of the east and of the west,
Your incense, gold, and myrrh are excellent!—

What gifts for Christ, then, bring ye
with the rest?

Your hands have worked well: is your
courage spent

In handwork only? Have you nothing
best,

Which generous souls may perfect and
present,

And he shall thank the givers for?
no light

Of teaching, liberal nations, for the
poor

Who sit in darkness when it is not
night?

No cure for wicked children? Christ—
no cure!

No help for women sobbing out of
sight

Because men made the laws? No
brothel-lure

Burnt out by popular lightnings?

Thus she wrote in the year of our Great Exhibition, seated at her "Casa Guidi Windows," and it required some courage to publish the lines. That the ideal should have its roots in the real, that the real, to be true, must be enkindled by the ideal, in matters of human love as well as in matters of art, such was her spontaneous message as much as it was that of her husband. Their purpose was the same, but he proclaimed it in tones strong enough to reach farther than hers. And though it sounds ordinary now, it did not sound so then, when the art of Ary Scheffer and the cult of sentiment were in vogue.

"Beloved," it sang, "we must be here
to work;

And men who work can only work for
men,
And, not to work in vain, must com-
prehend
Humanity and so work humanly,
And raise men's bodies still by raising
souls,
As God did first."

"But stand upon the earth,"
I said, "to raise them (this is human
too,
There's nothing high, which has not
first been low;
My humbleness, said One, has made
me great!)
As God did last. . . .

The man most man
Works best for men, and, if most man
indeed,
He gets his manhood plainest from
his soul:
While obviously this stringent soul it-
self
Obeys the old law of development,
The Spirit ever witnessing in ours,
And Love, the soul of soul, within the
soul,
Evolving it sublimely.

This passage from "Aurora Leigh" is idealism, but not of the rosy kind; it is the idealism which sees the ideal in the real, often in the ugly; which resulted in "Les Misérables," in the pictures of Jean François Millet, in Rossetti's painting of "Found," or in his poem of "Jenny." Thus, Early Victorian though she was in inward form, she stood no less at the parting of the ways, at the source of modern art, and hailed the rising sun. Her tendencies were forward and, at whatever time she might have lived, she would have been of *les jeunes*, unmindful of personal risk as long as some one reached the goal that many made for. The juvenile audience at a *Gay Lord Quer*, the babes fed on Ibsen, can afford to smile at Thackeray's rejection of "Lord Walter's Wife" as being too "strong" for the *Cornhill Magazine*; yet, mild as it seems to us now, to the inseeing eye it contains the germ of much—of the

whole protest of the spiritual against the material view of love. It requires a woman's hand to rend the veil from coarse fact with sufficient delicacy; to know where to lift, and where to drop it; and Mrs. Browning was practically the first who dared to attempt the task. Mrs. Hemans belongs to the literary generation before her, George Elliot to the one which followed after.

Nowhere has she shown more of her delicacy and courage than in her chief work, "Aurora Leigh," and nowhere has she more clearly worked out her message. For the outcome of the poem, the solution of the questions there set forth, is the marriage, after many struggles, of the ideal with the real; of Aurora Leigh the poetess, who believes in working first upon the soul of her fellows, with Romney Leigh the philanthropist, who believes in working first upon their bodies. It is the union of idea and action, both, as she teaches, inadequate half-truths till they join forces. And the book is rich in other notes characteristic of her singing. The wronged Marian Erle who lived only for her nameless child, stands out as the embodiment of the mother-love which was so strong in Mrs. Browning herself. And all the society characters in the story, however unnatural they may be, serve to prove, as she herself says elsewhere, that—

This age shows to my thinking still
more infidels to Adam
Than directly, by profession, simple
infidels to God.

There are obvious absurdities in the work. But Aurora and Romney live—in imaginative fashion; and even Marian Erle, though she does not make us believe in her, often revives in our eyes some sketch by Rossetti of Miss Siddal, so poetically pure that it seems as if comparison with fact would detract from its own inherent truth. The whole theme of the poem recalls the

kind of themes chosen by the pre-Raphaelites—Holman Hunt's "Awakened Conscience," Rossetti's "Found," Martineau's "Last Day in the Old Home." There are other things to remind us that the poetess was writing at the time that they were painting—the same desire to defy conventions and return to Nature; the same amassing of detail, sometimes to the detriment of the whole; the same chivalry and strenuousness; the same handling of a realistic subject in a mystic spirit, producing an unreal effect. There is, however, one wide difference between Mrs. Browning and the "P. R. B.'s." Purity of form, a clear-cut outline, were essentials of their art. Not so of hers. Her forms are defective, and often either rough or blurred; she seems to be so much absorbed in pouring out the new wine that she does not care much about the shape of the old bottles. It is this which makes us feel, when we put down "Aurora Leigh," that she would have written a fine novel; but of one thing we are sure—that we have not been reading a poem. It may be urged that she composed it in adverse circumstances. "She wrote in pencil, on scraps of paper, as she lay on the sofa in her sitting-room, open to interruption from chance visitors . . . simply hiding the paper beside her if any one came in."

And if her sense of form were found lacking only in this work the excuse would hold. But this is not so. Her poems, however sweet, are nearly always redundant, unconcentrated, too long and overcrowded with images; full, too, of the repetition of thoughts that vary but slightly from one another. The sonnet may perhaps be taken as a final proof of the sense of form possessed by a poet. It must be so condensed, so clearly outlined; it must supply the want of space by depth, it must be exquisitely wrought with lines deftly interlaced. But

Elizabeth Barrett Browning's sonnets do not stand the test; they are too unchiselled, too wordy. We except, of course, the "Sonnets from the Portuguese," because there the white heat of feeling does the work of the potter's furnace and gives them a shape of their own. But take "Discontent," or "Tears," or "Cheerfulness taught by Reason," and you will wonder why they were ever cast in sonnet-mould instead of being written as lyrics. There is a certain hymn-like quality about them, as, indeed, about many of her verses, which mars their strength and their design. And this will be felt the more if you compare them with the work of her contemporary, Christina Rossetti, the only other poetess whose name can be mentioned with hers. Many of Miss Rossetti's poems are hymns in subject and intention, and yet they remain pure poetry because their distinction of feeling is enshrined in distinction of form; because their burning intensity refines, but never destroys, the vessel which contains it. Each sonnet in the "Monna Innominata" series is in itself a crystalline gem, giving joy by its mere sound; while even the "Sonnets from the Portuguese" would not satisfy us apart from their meaning. Miss Rossetti had the Catholic mind; Mrs. Browning's spirit was Evangelical. Miss Rossetti, concentrated and cloistral, was the completer poet; Mrs. Browning, prodigal of herself, absorbed in helping the world, was the greater and the richer-natured woman. Nor are her poetic defects unaccountable. She lived before all the talk about form that has since become current coin; she had a fatal facility in rhyming and no self-conceit to make her cautious. And, although, fine Greek scholar that she was, she had a delicate ear for the classics, she had no wish to return to their methods. "Pan, Pan is dead," she cried; her generation had a new song

to sing, and she deliberately gave to all form a place of secondary importance. "To bring the invisible full into play, let the visible go to the dogs; what matters?" was her motto as well as that of Robert Browning; and, in her eyes, nothing did matter so long as the end in art exceeded the means.

Mrs. Browning had another faculty which is often a substitute, and sometimes a dangerous one, for form—the faculty for melody. It is this which gives to certain of her lines a magic, a pathos, they cannot lose. This and the gift that she possesses of evoking association; of reviving scents and sounds of past years, of making us live in the past—the past, for which she herself had a close and almost morbid affection. "I am strongly a creature of association," she once wrote to a friend; and her love of harking back for herself was as strong as her power of looking forward for the world. Such sentiments are almost inseparable from the melodies which clothe them and there are certain of her verses, seldom whole poems (except, perhaps, "The Poet and the Bird," or "A Musical Instrument," or "Catarina to Camoens"), that haunt the brain because of their tunefulness.

In the pleasant orchard-closes
"God bless all our gains," say we,
But may God bless all our losses
Better suits with our degree

is like a snatch of song. And the
"Mountain-gorses ever golden"—

Ye whom God preserveth still,
Set as lights upon a hill,
Tokens to the wintry earth that
Beauty liveth still—

are not likely to be forgotten. No
more is "Isobel's Child"—

The poplars tall on the opposite hill,
The seven tall poplars on the hill,
Did clasp the setting sun until

His rays dropped from him pined and
still

As blossoms in frost,
Till he waned and paled, so weirdly
crossed,
To the color of moonlight which doth
pass
Over the dank ridged churchyard grass.

The worst, perhaps, of this melodic gift
is the speed with which it cloy and
degenerates—its easy appeal to the
crowd.

Unless you can muse in a crowd all
day

On the absent face that fixed you;
Unless you can love, as the angels may,
With the breadth of heaven betwixt
you;

Unless you can dream that his faith is
fast,

Through believing and unbelieving;
Unless you can die when the dream is
past—

Oh, never call it loving!

—lines such as these have too much
of the tune that every man can learn.
And yet can we quarrel with the de-
fect, when it was this very quality of
popular emotionalness that enabled her
"Cry of the Children" to contribute, as
no other poem has done, to a reform in
the law of the land—one of the noblest
achievements ever accomplished by
art? Nor did she lack other talents
which corrected her diffuseness. Now
and again she shows an inconsistent
turn for aphorism, as in "Casa Guidi
Windows":—

An ignorance of means may minister
To greatness, but ignorance of aims
Makes it impossible to be great at all.

Or in "A Vision of Poets":—

Knowledge by suffering entereth
And life is perfected by Death.

The painter's gift, too, is hers. It of-
ten seems as if she wrote with a brush
rather than a pen, and her descriptions
of Nature, whether in England or in

Italy, show her at her best as an artist. She saw, she says, in a letter of 1854, "the wonderful Terni by the way—that passion of the waters which makes the human heart seem so still." Or earlier in the year, "Oh, those jagged mountains rolled together like pre-Adamite beasts and setting their teeth against the sky—it was wonderful," she writes from the Baths of Lucca.

If we think of Mrs. Browning's many-sidedness, our wonder at her character grows. She had lain on her couch between four walls for twenty years of her existence, suffering constant pain and weakness, and her soul triumphed over both. Shrinking as she did from contact with the unknown she had the courage at forty to know and to grasp life when it came to her in the guise of love; she did not flinch from her secret marriage, or from her wedding journey to Italy; and once there, in the full blaze of happiness at last, she did not, as would be most comprehensible, relapse into sublimated selfishness, but spent herself in thought for others. The cause of the Italians, struggling for a united Italy, absorbed her energies. She loved altars, she loved the flame upon them; and she kept her fires faithfully alight, for Mazzini, for Louis Napoleon, for Garibaldi, and, most of all, for Cavour. "I can scarcely command voice or hand to name *Cavour*," she wrote at his death. "That great soul which meditated and made Italy has gone to the diviner Country. If tears or blood could have saved him to us, he should have had mine."

In her great-heartedness and public spirit, Elizabeth Barrett Browning is nearer to George Sand than to any of her own countrywomen. George Sand felt for the French Republic of her dreams the same passion of hope, of disenchantment, of untiring aspiration that the Englishwoman felt for Italy. But, in Mrs. Browning's case, disillusion did not last, and no *coup d'Etat*

stained the fame of Victor Emmanuel. Both were women of 1848, the period of eternal youth, which seemed to give those who lived through it the power of never losing their ideals. Both were inveterate believers. Both were generous democrats whose written pictures of the poor were idylls rather than realities. Both would rather have renounced their pens than ceased to succor human suffering. Perhaps this is but another way of saying that both were inspired by ardent maternal devotion, lavished on their own children first, then on the countless children of others. But strong as is the likeness between these two leaders of the Romantic school, in the main functions of life their positions were exactly reversed. If Mrs. Browning was incomplete artist and complete woman, George Sand was the opposite. Complete artist she was—but she was incomplete woman.

Thou large-brained woman and large-hearted man
Self-called George Sand! Whose soul
amid the lions
Of thy tumultuous senses moans defiance.

Thus Mrs. Browning addressed her. Yet while we see George Sand's "woman-heart beat evermore through the large flame," we have to own that the "man" in her played too strong a part. "Je me hâte de vous confesser, ma Juliette, que pour une femme c'est une infériorité que se déféminiser," she said in her old age to Madame Adam.

That was an error Mrs. Browning had no need to renounce. Robert Browning and his wife will live as classics in perfect married love, as well as in the realm of poetry. And typically woman as she was, she was also what few women are—creative. "You are wrong—quite wrong—she has genius," said Browning to one who admired his work more than hers. "I

am only a painstaking fellow. Can't you imagine a clever sort of angel who plots and plans, and tries to build up something—he wants to make you see it as he sees it, hammering into your head the thing he wants you to understand; and whilst this bother is going on God Almighty turns you off a little star—that's the difference between us.

London Times.

The true creative power is hers, not mine." Shall this stand as Elizabeth Barrett Browning's epitaph? We will but add some words of her own from one of her letters:—"I can't look on the earth side of death. . . . When I look deathwards I look *over* death and upwards, or I can't look that way at all."

BACK TO THE LAND.

(A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.)

Those who, like Artemus Ward, have taken a brief glance at history will be aware that country life, with its activities of sport and agriculture, has been the nursery both of the domestic virtues and of the warlike spirit; such is still the belief of those who have been brought up at seminaries of classical learning, and who themselves live in towns, the more advanced spirits among them advocating rifle-clubs on the village green. I do not say that such was my belief, but still, when I read in the gardener's manual of the ecstasy produced by eating a cabbage fresh from its stalk, I thought there might be something in it. The unconscious deceit of photography made me think I was going to a modern red-brick villa. Further I was told that my next door neighbor would be one whose cry of *Back to the land* encircles the world, and may end in peopling the waste places with those whom an effete civilization is depriving of the rich red blood that a country life sends coursing through the veins of a vigorous and honest peasantry. I did not aspire to do more than behold in the distance the actual figure, but I thought that here at least would be all the health-giving influences that Nature can bestow.

The first view of the country was not propitious. It was early spring, and the road-side borders were thick with

the weeds that some parts of England produce spontaneously instead of herbage. I missed the incandescent light, and found all the lamps in the house not equal in candle-power to one C burner. But in comparison with health, and in justice to the right eminent physician who dwelt with curt authority on the bracing air, what is artificial illumination?

Next morning I rose in haste to look forth on the scene. I was not acquainted with the subject, but I felt instinctively that my eyes rested on a cesspool. Still, had not the clerk of the district council told me the place possessed a main-drainage system, and the landlord that it discharged two miles away? They had; but, as the landlord's solicitors remarked, this could deceive no one, since it was merely an answer to a question. From the cesspool to the well is an easy transition in thought, and so also it was in fact,—a mere seventy-one feet. Analysis (I have often in the light of further experience pondered on the value of analysis) proved the water to be excellent for drinking; its solids were remarkably few. The Sanitary Inspector was sure the cesspool could not contaminate the well. The by-laws required nine inches of brickwork, and a lining of cement. I suggested to him on the advice of my own Medical

" Officer of Health, who gave me parting counsel before my sojourn far from his protection, that in order to see if the brickwork was discolored he should descend the well. I offered out of my own head to supply him with a candle and to borrow a rope, and as an evidence of good faith to remain within hail. The Inspector regarded me with a suspicion of wanness in his glance; he should like to see my Medical Officer or any other Medical Officer go down that well. Silent we stood upon the brink, with a wild surmise that in the country was a Pacific of unexplored sanitation. Later, when the landlord refused to carry out any of the things required by the by-laws and I requested that the law should be put in force, he broke through his reserve:—"Things were very different in the country from the town, very different."

I feel still like Newton, a child picking 'up pebbles on the shore of that ocean, and this in spite of my experiences. I give them chronologically, for in this way I live over again that one year in which I was caught to the breast of Nature as she is known in an English country village. Presuming for the sake of argument that the cesspool did not pollute the well, how was it to be cleaned? To this the official answer was that I dwelt beyond the scavenging area. It was in vain to plead that the house paid rates; the Council was adamant. To scavenge half the village and rate the whole,—the system makes me suspect the introduction of Turkish blood from the seaboard. I was however at liberty to negotiate with the scavengers if I saw fit, or to deposit my refuse on my own lawn if I pleased. I summoned the scavengers, and as they had never been there before we passed a peaceful Summer evening in looking for the entrance to the cesspool; they merely charged a few more shillings than the contract price, and bare politeness required whisky for

five to relieve the strain of search, and to put things on a friendly footing. Business principles required it, too, seeing that they were under no legal obligation, and that, if they refused to work for me, I should have to clean the cesspool myself or abandon the house. They suggested in a spirit of good fellowship that they should place the contents on the kitchen-garden; they quoted, I know not if truly, the dictum of the Medical Officer,—in twenty-four hours the odor (if any, as they say in legal documents) would have disappeared, while the fertilizing effects would remain. Failing this the sands below were mentioned, but the fastidiousness of the town clung to me, and my ultimatum was removal from the premises. I retired into the house for the actual process, first begging the honor of the company of the senior scavenger in the morning that I might show myself sensible of his endeavors, and discuss any points of mutual interest. In going to the country to be braced it is of no use keeping up effete town habits; the heart of things must be reached.

In this way I learned that my cesspool had an overflow; there was really no reason to empty it at all; it emptied itself. The Inspector hastily summoned admitted that in special cases the Council sanctioned an overflow; mine it seemed was a special case. Refusing to scavenge for me, they very thoughtfully minimized the necessity for scavenging. I could not but ponder on the subject of the well-water. True, there was the official analysis, but which way did the overflow run? I put this point to the Medical Officer later. He replied, "We know." The eye of science can pierce the earth as it has mapped the heavens, but can it do it without digging? He based his opinion on something less laborious. That unerring eye scanning the cabages perceived that in the seventy-one

feet separating the water of life from the water of the overflow there was a fall of one foot; on that foot hung typhoid and the rest. I could not help asking myself, was the fall the same under-ground, or had the labors of the gardener, the trenching and digging, made the difference? Still the Local Government Board accepted this scientific survey as a quittance in full of all my grievances.

As one pain drives out another, so my chimneys made me intermittently forget my drains. Typhoid may or may not be on its way, but there is no doubt of the necessity of breathing. Like the exiles from Rome I was about to be deprived both of fire and water. One thing I have learnt, when building chimneys; do not run them up straight, let them draw over to each other. Otherwise, as the sweep told me, all cures are vain; at times they will smoke. Curiously enough these chimneys did not smoke till I came there. The landlord's solicitors were convinced of this, but being prudent men they added that it could not be guaranteed that they would not smoke, any or all of them, in a high wind. "So mote it be," as the masons remark at points of their ritual. But they smoked when the wind was not high. They smoked under different kinds of pots. The landlord being unable either to see or breathe on a fair May day admitted that they smoked now, "but never before." The blacksmith, hardened by his profession, entered the room declaring it was a fireman's business, while I at the open window called to him, who was invisible from time to time, to ascertain if he was still conscious. Even the gardening boy was moved to pause for a moment in mowing the lawn and glance towards the windows. When later I enquired the reason, he told me he had stayed the machine but for the instant

thinking the house was on fire. The chimneys were heightened and still they smoked. But they did not smoke when there were gales. A friendly interlocutor informed me that he had prophesied what would happen when they were built. The landlord himself came over to enquire into this curious phenomenon. He stood on the hearth-rug and contemplated the grate. He even asked my theory. I said, I had been told they were built wrongly. This calumny he hurled back in the teeth of their detractors; they were perverters of plain truth. What the explanation was I did not gather; it had something to do with the existence of a stable. Its failing to operate disadvantageously till I came he did not elucidate. Having spoken these winged words he left; shortly after I left too, the chimneys still smoking.

The well went wrong. It seemed after excessive labor that the pipe wanted mending, for the water fell back down the well as it was being pumped up. The local hero who descended brought up a bucket from the bottom for my inspection. Its appearance seconded the spoken word. He was against drinking the water till the well had been cleaned. One enthusiast advised me that there could be no greater possible proof of purity than a toad and creeping things in a well. He put it to me as a fair-minded man:—"Would they be found there, with all the wells of the neighborhood to choose from, if the water was not of a superior quality?" I was unconvinced and had the well cleaned; it was interesting to see how it was done, and to watch for the buckets of slime to come up. Two hundredweights was the estimate; it formed a heavy barrowful. It was surmised that the well had never been cleaned before. As it had for some time turned the water-bottles green, I inclined to the same opinion. But then, to be fair to the

well, there was the report of the county analyst; he and the toads were in agreement. Did the overflow go that way? Did slime matter?

While musing thus among the cab-bages I heard that diphtheria was in the neighboring village; should I trust to the toad, to the county analyst, to the local Council sanctioning an overflow? Having an only child I preferred not to take the odds. I then fathomed the reasons for the rural exodus. Even the birds and the beasts take care of their young; possibly it might be the village fathers felt as I did; it might be that they too, God help them! felt as bitterly as I did with the diphtheria coming closer and closer. It came, and we had thirty cases with three deaths. How much suffering there must have been; pitiful to hear of some of them sending their little ones away. But this is not written in a serious mood. The serious mood is rather for the legislators who ponder deeply about the decay of national physique, while the reason is often in the nearest village. I have been delighted, too, to see Professor Sims Woodhead point out lately that the water-supply is a matter of national concern. On the diphtheria swept till it spread over thirteen miles, and no one made a sign.

Sometimes in the long evenings before it came,—it was a hot rainless summer—I have stood at my gate and watched the simple home-coming of the ploughmen o'er the lea. There were no village Hampdens among them. Their women tolled at the well. Now, to draw a bucket of water up a hundred feet by winding a chain over a drum is exhausting labor, forty pails being the estimate for a wash. Their rates were ten shillings and two pence in the pound. For this they had no lighting or paving, no water, their cottages were four shillings and sixpence a week, and their wages low. They were scavenged at the discretion of

the District Council. They sometimes asked where the money went, much as the Russian peasant might enquire. The County Surveyor, when I wrote stating that no one had mended high-way or by-way for nine months, replied airily that it was very probable. The men had the evenings to themselves sometimes, and when they had they prepared the way for refreshing slumber by spreading the contents of their middens on the land. The enthusiast I have distantly alluded to writes that nowhere else have the vegetables the same wild flavor that they possess here; this he attributes to the peculiar saltiness of the air. I remarked that it was the hour of sunset. What can we do at sunset but with faces golden (my gate faced west) whisper to each other softly of a hope—that he is right?

Some one will say perhaps:—"I am surprised! A man of education! The villagers might not know, but an educated man! This is not Russia! There is justice in England! There is the Local Government Board! There are bishops and archbishops! There are medical men of European reputation! There are soldiers all eager to retard the deterioration of the race!" Such was precisely the line I took up. I wrote to the Local Government Board. I said: "The diphtheria is a mile or two away; in these conditions [I told them the conditions] it must come here. This is a matter of public interest; this is the reason why people are leaving the villages. Will you have my cesspool cleaned for me? Will you have the cesspools of these other people cleaned for them? Will you look to the water-supply?"

They acknowledged my letters; they always acknowledged my letters. They took a huge sheet of the finest foolscap paper, and wrote that they had received my letter. When the reply seemed to lack definiteness and I bombarded them again, they sometimes ac-

knowledge again, and sometimes referred me to the previous reply. So the months slipped away. They could not act till they got a report, and when the report came, they still could not act. The report, I gathered, was sent about in sections, I think, to all complainants. Mine had three paragraphs. The first stated that the group of houses, of which mine was one, where the scavengers did not call could not be found. I asked the Board to send an inspector and I would indicate them from my front gate. They refused. The second paragraph said, in effect, "We know," about the slope through the cabbage-garden. The third dwelt proudly on my distinguished neighbor. I admitted his distinction humbly, but asked how his proximity served as a substitute for scavenging or as a prophylactic against diphtheria. In vain I asked why they delayed; they told me there was no statutory duty to prevent an overflow near a well, or to scavenge, though levying the rate. They corresponded with unflagging diligence for nine months, before the diphtheria came; when it was there, when the schools were closed, and when I left, the place was in the throes of a contest over another overflow. Nero fiddled when Rome was burning, but he did not call for his tablets and write letters to the sediles, docketing them and the replies for future reference; nor did he employ a staff of clerks at the public expense for this object; he merely misgoverned, and that was all about it. The mystery to me is why you should pay for schools which are closed for recurrent epidemics before you have installed a satisfactory water-supply.

It is sweet upon the shore, as, if I recollect aright, the Roman poet wrote, to watch the vessels struggling with the storm; I wonder if he had been an ædile, with a salary. It is sweet to think of that overflow, and wonder who is bathing in it now, and who is drink-

ing of its pellucid water. Last year I saw a visitor, whom I did not disturb from motives of genuine kindness, being forgetful for the moment of the facts, lying there upon his face, while his wife picked the flowers properly belonging to me, enjoying, no doubt, the peculiar saltiness that so favorably affects the vegetables. It did not strike me then that it was probably at that identical spot that the overflow bubbled up through the sands. I cannot say for certain, for the Medical Official never got beyond "We know." What they know has not been revealed to me; perhaps it was better to leave it dubious.

It is sweet to think that others are trusting to this official guardianship. It is this that makes the artist in social problems deplore the rural exodus. It is this that makes them hold conferences in London where they speak with authority on rustic problems. I would like to lead them gently out and let them wind a bucket up a hundred feet instead of turning a tap. I would also like to leave them face to face with a cesspool and without a scavenger. I would farther like, when, after seeking the rest-cure in some bracing place, they do not feel quite so well as they did, to ask if they have been bathing in or drinking from an overflow, mine or another's. When they hold a great meeting and try to search out the reasons for physical deterioration let them ask how many people's drains are right, how many villages have an adequate water-supply, and how much food is adulterated; and when they have set those two little matters right, then is the time to talk of Swedish exercises and cadet corps.

But this is not the popular or scientific view. Science says majestically, "We know." The popular voice, when the spirits fall, and the children's appetites go off, and their eyes get wan in preparation for the great change, de-

clares that the air is too strong for them, meaning that it is too salubrious, too life-giving. When the hopeful ones walk with you down the village street between the little gardens, on which the village economist or every-man-his-own-scavenger is spreading that whose scent disappears in twenty-four hours, before the first of those too necessary hours are passed, they ask through the nose, to which the handkerchief is gracefully held, "Is the air too pure for you?" If, when you can draw a breath, you libel the air, they tell you passionately that never was there a bolder peasantry than when the women filled the kettle at the pond. The air itself, you are informed, is bracing, filled with ozone. Hither it is the London doctors send their patients. Look at the age

Macmillan's Magazine.

of the people, some over eighty! Look at the vegetables! Those who catch typhoid, children who die of diphtheria, would die anywhere. Never think of it; think of the air, of the fabulous sums paid in the summer for houses with overflows. It is the surpassing sweetness of the air, its ethereal fragrance that makes you feel unwell; it was the scent of the roses just now that made them put up a handkerchief. Inure yourself to deep and frequent draughts, and if you do not mind hurrying a little past this garden, trust yourself to Nature confidently as the vegetables do, and you will for the first time feel what it is to live. If you should happen not to live, that is only one more proof that the air of the country is too pure for you.

Kennelm D. Cotes.

TO ALL THAT GRUMBLE.

You that only appear contented
 When you are grumbling about your lot,
 Mainly because of a much lamented
 Absence of all that you haven't got,
 Listen to me, for I bring you healing:—
 If you would scatter those moods away,
 If you would conquer that injured feeling,
 Listen to me, I say.

Years ago, for a certain season,
 I was a pessimist (strange but true),
 And, as a matter of fact, with reason,
 Not for the fun of the thing, like you;
 All that I merited, looked for, built on,
 Seemed to be doomed to a fatal slump;
 Mine was the mental complaint which *Milton*
 Happily termed the Hump.

Came a night—and of all Decembers
 That was the vilest—I sat alone,
 Bitterly smoking before the embers,
 Hugging my grievance, and making moan;
 Out in the open a biting blizzard,
 Whirling the gravel about like snow,
 Froze the marrow, and turned the gizzard
 Inside out, at a blow.

Then I said, this is something hellish
 (Which was a fact), and I crossed the room,
 Flung up the blind, and with sour disrellish
 Gazed for awhile on the roaring gloom;
 Till, on a sudden, my awe-struck glances
 Fell on a sentinel's heav'n-sent form,
 Driven, by pressure of circumstances,
 Out in that beastly storm.

High on a magazine, bleak and lonely.
 Nobly he paced his appointed beat
 (Rather like *Casabiana*, only
 That little horror complained of heat),
 Daring an enemy's foot to trench on his
 Windy preserves, he was hurled about,
 Getting his spine well iced, not to mention his
 Gizzard blown inside out.

Long I gazed on the gusty fellow;
 Gazed, till mine uglier moods were spent;
 Gazed, till my whole soul seemed to mellow
 Into a chastened and bland content;
 And, as I blessed him, and drew the curtain,
 Leaving him up on his wind-swept mound,
 Life, I remarked, though a bit uncertain,
 Wasn't so bad, all round.

Grumbler, such is the Grand Idea:
 Surely the moral is plain to see;
 When you're in need of a panacea,
 Think of the sentinel—think of *me!*
 Turn to Philosophy's consolation;
 Doubtless the gods may have used you ill;
 But—by a Merciful Dispensation—
 Others are worse off still!

Punch.

Dum-Dum.

CRITICISM OF THE ABSENT.

Ought we to criticise our friends behind their backs? This is the subject which the delightful essayist who looks upon life "from a College window" discusses this month in the *Cornhill*. The first part of his paper consists of a dialogue. He was staying, he tells us, not long ago "in the house of an old friend, a public man,

who is a deeply interesting character, energetic, able, vigorous, with very definite limitations." There was only one other guest in the house, also, as it happened, an old friend, "a serious man." One night all three were together in the smoking-room, when the host "rose, excused himself, saying he had some letters to write," and left his guests

alone. As soon as he was gone the writer of the article said to his "serious" companion:—"What an interesting fellow our host is! He is almost more interesting because of the qualities that he does not possess, than because of the qualities that he does possess." An innocent remark, which elicited the following crushing reply:—"If you propose to discuss our host, you must find some one else to conduct the argument. He is my friend, whom I esteem and love, and I am not in a position to criticise him." In vain the writer pleaded that he too had a great regard for the man upon whose character he had just been commenting,—that that, indeed, was the reason why he would like to discuss him. The serious man would not listen to his arguments. All criticism of the absent was in his eyes disloyal. He regretted that his friend should make a habit of it. We ought not, he thought, "to be afraid, if necessary, of telling our friends about their faults; but that is quite a different thing from amusing oneself by discussing their faults with others." The reader is relieved to hear that soon after this they went to bed, as the discussion evidently threatened to become acrimonious.

Next day the upholder of the right of criticism returned to his "College window" and thought over the argument, telling his reader his thoughts with his usual genial frankness. Not to talk about one's friends would be, he reflects, "deplorably dull," and "dulness, whether natural or acquired," is "responsible for a large amount of human error and misery." For his own part, he confesses to feeling most minute and detailed interest in the smallest matters connected with other people's lives and idiosyncrasies. He hates biographies of the dignified order, which do not condescend to give what are called personal details. He

is certain that "of all the shifting pageant of life, by far the most interesting and exquisite part is our relations with the other souls who are bound on the same pilgrimage." Finally, he decides that the "serious" man was altogether wrong; that those who "do not desire to discuss others, or who disapprove of doing it, may be pronounced to be, as a rule, either stupid, or egotistical, or pharisaical; and sometimes they are all three." We all have, he maintains, a clear right to discuss our friends, provided we do not do so "ill-naturedly," or "malevolently," or in a spirit of cynicism,—in fact, "the only principle to bear in mind is the principle of justice."

Of course the "serious man" was a man of straw," and one dressed up in ludicrously old-fashioned clothes. Surely there could not be found any one at the present time to assert that we should say nothing behind the back of a friend which we could not say to his face. Such advice belongs to a day of rougher manners. For all that, we cannot altogether accept the judgment of the essayist, and we think he might have put a few more reasonable arguments into the mouth of his opponent, and made him a little more worthy of his steel. To say that in the discussion of our friends we should be regulated and limited by the sense of justice alone is surely to allow too great a latitude. It places our friends upon an equal footing with our enemies. Is it possible, ought it to be possible, to be only just in talking of a friend? "It does not help on the world if we go about everywhere slobbering with forgiveness and affection," we read, and "it is the most mawkish sentimentality to love people in such a way that we condone grave faults in them." Certainly; but all the same, there is a sense in which a man should be always his friend's advocate and never his friend's judge; and there

are cases in which, if he feels himself too stupid to play the part, or circumstances render such a part impossible, he ought in loyalty to decline the discussion. Every man knows, or imagines he knows, which comes to the same thing, his friend's character. He knows his inner nature,—that nature which lies below the surface and cannot be permanently altered for the worse by the diverse storms of circumstance. It is precisely because he approves this inner nature that he likes him, that he decides in his favor and regards him as his friend; and this decision he ought, in talking of him, never to forget. Justice must deal more or less exclusively with a man as he expresses himself in his words and actions, and must acquit or condemn him on the evidence of these. It is essential to justice that it should not be influenced by any predisposition in favor of the person under discussion; it is essential to friendship that such a predisposition should never be forgotten. Again, it is easy to be too hard on those who do not desire to discuss others. It does show a certain want of human interest, but at least it has nothing to do with egotism. The man with a strong desire to talk of his friends' characters has, as a rule, a strong desire to talk of his own. How much good manners may restrain him in this matter is a question of upbringing and will-power.

The wish to define in words the characters with whom we come in contact is connected with the literary sense. A man who has not got it can very seldom put his thoughts on paper. Many people do not discuss their friends because they do not know how; but that does not mean that they are stupid, or priggish, or indifferent to them. Many a man who cannot describe, or draw, or say anything worth hearing about a natural scene, who does not care to look at a painting or

listen to an analysis of natural beauty, has none the less a great feeling for Nature. The want in him is not intellectual, but artistic. He does not know how to express his impressions. The man who does not want to criticize his friend is in the same case. To hear some one else do it gives him no pleasure, and sometimes it strikes him as rather profane. No doubt the most important part in the life of most men and all women belongs to their relationship to those about them; but some people do not like to discuss that relationship any more than they like to discuss their health. They argue that as much dulness has been the result of personal conversation as can ever be created by its absence; indeed, it is a subject which pursued exclusively, and for its own sake, leads more quickly than any other to a desert of dulness. It is only in its larger bearings that personal talk can continue entertaining,—only, indeed, when it is indulged in by those whose chief topic it is not. Small details about other people's lives are only of interest if we know the great ones. It is of no intrinsic interest that Carlyle had indigestion, and Mrs. Carlyle was jealous. Some people like to hear about the jealousy and the indigestion, because these little facts add life to their mental picture of a man and a woman of genius. But there are many by no means pharisaical men and women who do not think these personal items add to the truth of the picture, but merely serve to confuse the relative values. They feel that very often when we are studying a character we should know better if we knew less.

It is very difficult to refute the writer in the *Cornhill*. Logic and common-sense are both on his side; nonsense, conventionality, and want of frankness are all on the other. Yet throughout his paper we feel that he ignores a sentiment which does, and

does rightly, restrain the ordinary man when he talks about the absent whom he likes. It is the same strong sentiment which makes us hesitate to speak with complete frankness of the dead. Dryden trusted to it when at the end of his life, believing that he had exhausted his power, and lamenting that,

Unprofitably kept at Heaven's expense,
I live a rent-charge on his Providence,
he wrote to Congreve and commended to him both his manuscripts and his reputation:—

Be kind to my remains, and oh, defend,
Against your judgment, your departed friend.

Again, does not our author ignore a
The Spectator.

somewhat analogous sentiment too entirely when he says that "we have a perfect right—nay, we do well—to condemn in others faults which we frankly condemn in ourselves"? Do we do well? If our sole purpose in writing or speaking is one of edification, if we are preaching a sermon or writing a moral disquisition, we are certainly not bound to allow our defects of character to spoil the symmetry or effectiveness of our work. But if we are discussing a friend, do we still do well? Logically, perhaps we do. But surely there is something morally unsound about an action which produces in ninety-nine ordinary men out of a hundred a very disagreeable twinge of conscience.

CHEMIST AND FARMER.

Tilling the soil is the very oldest of the many arts by which man strives to gain a livelihood. Beginning as a rude effort marking the very dawn of civilization it has gone on growing in power and success through all the ages, each generation in turn adding something which it learnt to the common stock of knowledge. Through many centuries the increasing knowledge thus gathered in was wholly of the kind we call empirical. Man found out step by step that doing certain things bettered the crops, that, for instance, animal refuse improved the soil, that it was good to let land at times lie fallow for a while, that growing a crop of some leguminous plant favored a succeeding crop of cereals and so on. All this ever-growing new knowledge embodied in precepts became the guide of the farmer's work; but for many generations neither he nor any one else attempted or indeed cared to explain why the good result followed the approved action; it was

enough for the practical man that the good was secured.

In more modern times however, especially in the early years of the last century, science moving onwards with rapid strides, and making its way into all kinds of human activity, turning things often upside down, came to agriculture also. Workers in the rapidly advancing science of chemistry saw in the dealings between the plant and the soil striking illustrations of chemical processes. They soon felt themselves able to explain to the farmer, in what seemed to be an adequate manner, the reasons for the procedures which, led by tradition, he was with more or less satisfactory results adopting. Moreover, for such is the way of science, they went further, and told him of new measures, suggested by chemical knowledge, by means of which he could make those results still better; they pointed out to him, for instance, the value of mineral manures by the use of which, at a relatively

small cost, he could largely increase his crops. Thus theoretical science invaded practical agriculture.

Some of the results of this scientific advice were not perhaps so fully beneficial as had been expected; the farmer did not reap all that the chemist had promised him. But one thing came out clearly from the chemist's efforts, the huge variety and complexity of the problems involved in the attempt to make the earth yield a greater crop. Part of this complexity had gradually become known even in much earlier times, namely the complexity of the ways of all living things, of plants no less than animals; but, as the chemist strove to see his way through the doings of the farm, he became aware that the ways of the soil were no less varied and complex than those of the plant itself. And as inquiry pressed onward year after year, the problems of the soil seemed to multiply, and to withdraw farther and farther from solution. The more the soil was studied, the more clearly it was seen not only that one soil differed from another soil in chemical composition, in the relative amounts of lime, alumina, potash and the like of which it was made up, and in physical characters, its looseness, adhesiveness, friability, and the like, but also that these two sets of features, mutually dependent the one on the other, were subject to continual change according as the rain soaked through the land or the sun beat on it, or the farmer carted his manures on it, and carried his crops off from it. And this great complexity suddenly appeared still greater when it was brought to light that the cultivated soil was itself as it were a living thing, that it was alive in the sense that it was teeming with myriads of minute living organisms, invisible to the unassisted eye, which silently and noiselessly were ever hard at work transforming in an unsuspected way the

chemical and physical texture of the ground.

In the 'forties of the last century one John Bennet Lawes, owner of an estate at Rothamsted, in Harpenden, Hertfordshire, having been drawn towards chemical science, was making money by showing how phosphatic manures might be obtained not only from bones, the stock of which was limited, but from the vastly more abundant mineral deposits. Happily he also, with singular insight, had grasped the real nature and true bearings of the problems of agriculture then before the world, and calling to his assistance a young trained chemist, Joseph Henry Gilbert, set up on his estate at Rothamsted an experimental farm with the view to attempt at least the solution of some of them.

One problem especially weighed upon him, a problem connected with what may perhaps be called one of the riddles of the universe. Biological studies teach us that what we are still accustomed to speak of as "the element nitrogen" is the chemical pivot of life. Protoplasm whether of the plant or of the animal, and all that is made out of protoplasm, consists of many chemical substances, but the central constituent is that which is called proteid or sometimes albuminous matter, and the distinctive component of proteid matter is nitrogen. Without nitrogen all the other things which go to build up the body of a plant or animal are wholly useless; nitrogen is the leader of all these other things, guiding all their activities to the ends of life. Hence nitrogen is the first essential of all food whether of the plant or the animal. Yet the animal finds it the hardest to get of all the things which serve him as food. Though more than three-quarters of the atmosphere wrapping round the earth is nothing but nitrogen, no animal—and this is as it were the tragedy of

life—can touch for the purposes of food this almost boundless store of it. When he breathes he takes right into his body a supply of air, but he sends this out again with the nitrogen, and the nitrogen alone, untouched. Not one tittle of nitrogen can he take from the air; he must seek for all the nitrogen which he so imperiously needs in nitrogenous substances existing in the bodies of plants or of animals which had in their turn fed on plants.

Is the plant more fortunate than the animal? Can it take its nitrogen direct from the atmosphere? This was a question largely exercising men's minds when Lawes began his farm; and closely bound up with it was another question—namely, How far is it profitable to feed a plant with nitrogenous manures? To this latter question Lawes first applied himself; but he soon saw that neither this nor any other special question touching the treatment of the soil could be satisfactorily answered by studying the particular question by itself alone. He was thus led to develop a systematic plan, which happily his means enabled him to carry out, of devoting his experimental farm to a general and fundamental study of what changes are wrought in the plant by the soil, what changes are wrought in the soil by the plant, and how these vary under varying conditions. He varied the conditions by applying to the soil according to a well-thought-out scheme known quantities of different kinds of manure; and recognizing that, amid the manifold changes for ever going on in such a complex living mixture as is the soil, what is done one day will not tell its tale on that day or the next but may need many days or even many years before its story is ended, he arranged that the observations which made up his experiments should go on unbroken for at least a long period of time. During that time other varia-

tions in the conditions not of his making, the potent variations of weather for instance, would have scope to make themselves felt.

Thus after some tentative trials was in 1852 inaugurated the grand Rothamsted multiple experiment, the like of which can be seen nowhere else, and the story of which is charmingly told in simple language by the now director Mr. A. D. Hall, in the book which is the occasion of this article.¹ We cannot here expound the details of the experiment; for these we must refer the reader to the book itself. But we may indicate the general plan of the experiment by saying a few words concerning that part of it which deals with wheat; for this may be taken as a sample of the rest. A field of some eleven acres, called the Broad Walk field, is divided into plots, and each plot has been treated separately on a consistent plan since 1852. One most interesting plot has received no manure whatever since the beginning, though a crop of wheat has been taken from it in each successive year. On the other plots known quantities of farm-yard manure and various combinations of artificial manures, nitrogenous manures of different kinds, and phosphatic and other mineral manures, have been applied to the same area year after year; and wheat has been grown on all of them. Accurate records have been kept of the yield of grain, including its market quality, and of straw. Samples of the soil have been taken and analyzed, or kept for such analysis as may be demanded. The rainfall and other meteorological conditions have been carefully noted; the drainage water has been analyzed from time to time; and indeed every fact which could help to throw light on

¹ "The Book of the Rothamsted Experiments." By A. D. Hall. Issued with the authority of the Lawes Agricultural Trust Committee. London; Murray. 1905. 10s. 6d net.

what the effect of the manures has been and how that effect has been brought about has been carefully observed and registered. Thus has grown up and is still growing a mass of facts, the analysis of which has already thrown on the growth of wheat such a light as has never been thrown elsewhere, and from the further analysis of which still greater light may in the future be expected.

Barley, root crops, and leguminous crops have been and are being treated in the same way; and special researches have been carried out on the latter, the leguminous crops, since they, working hand in hand with certain mysterious microbes clinging round their roots, drag down the inert coy free nitrogen of the atmosphere and bury it in the soil in the form of available nitrogenous manure.

Perhaps the most fascinating part of the whole experiment is that in which since 1856, that is for half a century, a stretch of about seven acres of old pasture lands divided into plots according to the general plan, has been treated with various manures. The results of this treatment have been recorded and analyzed with a minuteness exceeding even that adopted elsewhere. In each plot not only has the total yield of hay been accurately measured, but also the relative proportions of the different kinds of grasses and of the different leguminous and other plants which go to make up the hay, have been carefully determined. Thus has been gathered in a most valuable mass of knowledge concerning the influence of different manures on not only the amount but also the quality of the yield from pasture land. A very striking sight is presented by this grass experiment at midsummer just before hay harvest. As the eye

travels over the several plots it sees this one with a scanty and stunted growth, that one with a tall thick covering bowed down by the very weight of its own luxuriance, this one a sickly yellow, that one a deep rich green, this one full of clover or other pasture herbs, that one bearing none at all, each plot telling how it has been treated in such a way that even he who runs may read.

The manifold work thus carried on without a break for more than fifty years in all the several parts of the whole experiment is gradually making known to us the fundamental laws according to which the plant and the soil act and react on each other. Some of these laws have already been made clear enough to be translated into rules for the conduct of the farm; these the reader will find briefly told at the ends of the several chapters of the book. But the great worth of the whole enterprise lies in the promise of what is yet to come out of it. The farm with its records is a rich mine of agricultural science; it is being diligently worked by the help of the funds left by the founder; but large as these funds seemed to be in the earlier days of the work, the very progress which they have brought about shows how very inadequate they are to bring to the surface all that is hidden below. If it be true that agriculture is a great, perhaps the greatest, national industry, if it be true that in it as in other industries, success is mainly to be looked for in the alert and resolute use of scientific knowledge, the welfare of the farm at Rothamsted is nothing less than a matter of national concern; and the nation ought to see to it that the fullest use is made of its unique opportunities.

M. Foster.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

A new volume of lectures by F. B. Jevons, entitled "Religion in Evolution," has just been published. In these lectures, delivered in the vacation term for Biblical study at Cambridge, the author discusses the question whether the aborigines of Australia are in a pre-religious stage, and argues that even if science had discovered the origin and traced the Evolution of Religion, the validity of Religion would still remain to be determined.

It is a delightful group of short stories that Harriet Prescott Spofford's publishers bring together under the title "Old Washington." Though each is independent of the others, familiar characters re-appear, and Mrs. McQueen's boarding-house plays a part in all, till its sweet and winsome mistress leaves it, in the very last chapter, to make "The Colonel's Christmas." The period is that immediately following the Civil War, and Southern gentlewomen bravely making their fight for self-support, unscrupulous lawyers, fattening on fees from claimants of confiscated property, and United States Senators swaggering under newly-acquired wealth, are conspicuous figures. Mrs. Spofford has been peculiarly successful in reproducing the mellow charm of the best Southern society of the old days. Little, Brown & Co.

"Hearts and Creeds," Anna Chapin Ray's latest novel, bids fair to be one of the most readable and popular books of the season. The scene is laid in Quebec, and the interest centres in the love of an ardent young Frenchman, of unquestioned standing among his own race, and with the promise of a brilliant political career, for a beautiful

English girl whose heart and head are sadly at variance in regard to him. The struggle between opposing tastes, principles, and faiths is a long one, and the outcome is uncertain to the very last chapter. The character of Leleu is finely drawn, and one is grateful to Miss Ray for so sympathetic a portrait of so fresh a type. Politics of a recent date play a prominent part in the story; there is a second pair of lovers whose wholesome, sunny temper lightens the tension of the plot; the dialogue is sprightly, the pictures of social life are full of piquant detail, and the Canadian background is charmingly done. Little, Brown & Co.

It is a new Boston woman that Eugenia Brooks Frothingham satirizes in "The Evasion"—not the familiar figure of clubs and cults, but the bridge-playing, cigarette-smoking, cocktail-drinking woman of "the small smart set." The heroine of the story, Gladys Lawrence, is the daughter of a professor in one of New England's smaller colleges, and brings with her to the reckless gaiety of her aunt's luxurious home ethical traditions and a conscience. Her two most favored lovers are Harvard men, one is captain of his football team, handsome and winning, the other plain, brusque and full of the zeal of the social reformer and iconoclast. The first half of the plot is determined by a card-cheating episode; the last may be regarded as the author's contribution to the much-disputed topic of divorce. Miss Frothingham's musical novel, "The Turn of the Road," was received with much favor, two or three years ago, and the same popularity may be predicted for "The Evasion." Houghton, Mifflin & Co.